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THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD IN MODERN LIFE

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TO

THE FACULTY OF THE
OBERLIN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
IN GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION

PREFACE

THIS book consists of lectures delivered last autumn at Union Theological Seminary. The subject discussed is much more difficult than it was when it first occurred to me several years ago, but it is correspondingly more important. There should be no moratorium for theological and religious thinking during the period of the war. The relation of such thinking to the morale of the forces of the Kingdom of God is too vital for that. We should not expect valor without vision, nor steadfastness without faith. The democracy, social and world-wide, which so many of us increasingly feel to be our true and only hope is itself a matter of religion, and religion can fulfil its mission only as it issues in such a democracy; but this reciprocal relation will not be clearly grasped without the aid of earnest thinking. It was, accordingly, with the hope of making some slight contribution toward meeting our

present spiritual emergency that the argument of the following chapters was worked out.

For helpful criticism and counsel I wish to express my especial thanks to my colleague, Professor William J. Hutchins.

EUGENE W. LYMAN.

OBERLIN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY,
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THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD IN MODERN LIFE

INTRODUCTION

THE modern world is in quest, dumbly and half-consciously, of a religion. That is, it is moving out toward a new adjustment to reality, human and cosmic, and toward a new appropriation of ideals, which when accomplished will be fundamental, comprehensive, spiritual, and so essentially religious; and of this movement it is growingly aware. The old atoms of our thought, supposed to be indivisible and unchangeable, are breaking up, but the new ions which shall resolve some of the deadlocks in our thinking have not been surely discovered. The old empirical medicine by which we used to poultice the social order is thoroughly discredited, but the new antisepsis and hygiene which shall secure vigorous social health and growth are only in their beginnings and are regarded in many quarters with superstitious fear.

Even the written constitutions of the ecclesiastical world sometimes experience a certain strain, though none of the supreme courts that interpret them have frankly followed the example of our national supreme court and adopted the "rule of reason." Of the radical character and the extent of these changes not a few minds were beginning to take some account before the World War, but with the progress of the war they are more and more coming home to the minds of people at large. We do not expect to emerge from this war with the same intellectual, social, and spiritual systems that we had when we entered upon it. We know that the war is bound to be followed by a new world, vastly different—whether for better or worse—from the old. Times of such tremendous change men instinctively feel are in a peculiar sense times for religion. And so they are asking: "What religion shall we, and can we, have?" It will be our purpose in the following discussions to try to do something toward answering this question.

The first aspect of our question—"What religion *shall* we have?"—turns partly upon what modern life most urgently needs,

and partly upon what religion has to offer that meets those needs; and the second aspect of our question—"What religion *can* we have?"—turns upon the relation of these central modern meanings of religion to reality as a whole. These turning-points, therefore, may well furnish the orientation by which the course of our thought is determined.

If one flings out a general inquiry as to what modern life needs from religion he is likely to provoke a multitude of divergent and contradictory answers, ranging all the way from "Nothing" to "Everything." But in these days of world convulsion the modest and respectful attitude on the part of contrasting groups of thought is the only commendable one. No one of them has any very good claim to be self-sufficient—able to say to any of the others: "I have no need of thee." It is a time for coalition cabinets in the realm of social philosophy. And in fact modern life is far from feeling itself to be self-sufficient as regards religion. On the contrary it is peculiarly plastic to such influence, provided religion will speak straight to its deepest needs.

So, too, the determining of what religion

has to offer to meet modern needs cannot be done in an arbitrary and dogmatic spirit. Religion, in view of the present moral relapse in the civilized world, is having to refund many of its most valuable assets with long-time promises, to keep which at their par value will tax its utmost energies. The "note of authority" so often demanded of religious teachers must reduce itself to the open-minded sincerity of a religion that seeks to be the servant of life. The world situation, then, sets aside all assumption of self-sufficiency on the part of modern life, and of dogmatic authority on the part of religion, and challenges them to mutual co-operation.

At what points, if anywhere, may we expect this co-operation to be most real and successful? A detailed and exhaustive analysis of modern needs is obviously beyond the scope of the task of these three lectures. We can only select certain needs which are clearly vital and comprehensive, and with which all others are likely to prove more or less directly bound up, doing something to justify the selection as we proceed. Let me suggest, then, that modern life needs aid from religion in three great tasks:

the development of personality, the promotion of social progress, and the interpretation of cosmic evolution.

But in what form, in turn, may we most hopefully look for the co-operative action of religion in respect to these tasks? Here the whole wide field of the psychology and history of religion stretches out before us, and here again we must select. Let the present-day emphasis upon religious experience be our clew, and in order that we may be dealing with that which is unmistakably religion let us take the experience of God as a conception which is broadly inclusive of what religion has to bring to the great tasks of modern life. This selection, however, I hasten to add, is made merely in order to delimit a field of inquiry, and with the express intention of not drifting into the dogmatic attitude already condemned. It involves on the one hand no denial of the possibility of a religious experience without an experience of God, and on the other hand no assumption as to the nature or validity of the experience of God. These are matters which must not be prejudged, for they are themselves subjects of our inquiry. Here at the outset of

our discussion, then, we mean by the experience of God simply that which in their own personal lives men feel or think of as such an experience. Thus our question, "What religion shall, and can, the modern world have?" when more fully stated, becomes an inquiry into the meaning, value, and reality of the experience of God in modern life.

Under this general topic the three great needs which we have said were fundamental for the modern world give us the themes for our three discussions. They are: "The Experience of God and the Development of Personality," "The Experience of God and Social Progress," and "The Experience of God and Cosmic Evolution." And in this statement of our themes is involved the scientific method which will be governing our inquiry and which should be pointed out here. We are not bringing the experience of God as men feel or believe themselves to have it, in all its heterogeneousness, to modern life, with the insistence that it all be found valuable. Nor are we assuming that modern life furnishes the final framework to which religion must be ruthlessly pruned. We are simply seek-

ing for certain significant points where the experience of God and modern life are capable of interacting with each other with mutual quickening effect. In other words, we shall not take final norms from religion to impose upon modern life, nor final norms from modern life to impose upon religion; but out of the vital conjunction of the two we shall hope to obtain certain working principles which are of importance for the growth of the human spirit. This would seem to be the legitimate meaning of the empirical method in an evolutionary world. We are, accordingly, to consider the experience of God in its relation to modern life from three points of view—the personal, the social, and the cosmic.

I

THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

We turn, then, to the immediate theme of the hour: the experience of God and the development of personality. The justification already promised for the selection of the development of personality as a fundamental modern need is in one sense hardly necessary. Personality is certainly one of the great words of the present, a word to conjure by even with the popular mind. But perhaps for this very reason it is in danger of degenerating to a merely superficial use. An advertisement in *The New Republic* reads as follows: "Build up your personality. It is your greatest social, professional, and business asset. Other persons may successfully copy your business and social methods but no one can copy your personality. Become a personality. Our correspondence course will teach you how. Write for particulars." Fortunately this advertisement comes not from the school of religion on 120th Street,

but from an institution on 12th Street. For no correspondence course will teach one how to become a personality. The word has acquired a depth and a range that cannot be lightly passed over. Into it and its equivalent have been put the highest dreams of the race. Lotze has given us the conception of personality as an infinite ideal toward which man may indefinitely approach. Nietzsche has struck out for us the idea of the Superman, which among other meanings suggests to us that there are ranges of personality entirely beyond our present horizon. Democratic thought presents the ideal of a genuine personality for every human individual. And Christianity, with its conceptions of freedom, service, and immortality, has brought the essential features of these dreams into a living union the fruitfulness of which we may well believe is far from being exhausted yet.

But notwithstanding the possession of these great dreams and all they have done for us, the development of personality confronts us as our most urgent and perplexing task. For our other development has outstripped the development of per-

sonality. Science has had a swift development, but conscience has by no means kept pace with it. Yet only the harmonious interaction of science and conscience can bring forth true personality. Production has expanded enormously, while education has progressed but moderately. Yet only as production and education keep step can vigorous personalities be built up. The diffusion of ideas has reached a high degree of perfection, but the ideas diffused are often cheap and thin; the means of enjoyment are at the disposal of all, but the power wisely to enjoy is at the command of but few. Yet only as intelligence and taste interpenetrate with information and entertainment can sane and elastic persons result. And so it has come to pass that, even in the free republics in which the opportunities of life are most widely shared, the opportunity to be a personality is denied to whole classes; and while the technique of controlling physical things forges ahead, the art of developing personalities lags behind. And at the present crisis it often seems as though our entire civilization were nothing but a wrecked airship, with the personalities supposed to

be most especially in control helplessly entangled in the wreckage.

If, then, the task of developing personality is one whose fundamental urgency for modern life can hardly be denied, what aid for its accomplishment can be looked for from the experience of God? We shall consider first the meaning and value of such experience for this task, and then its reality or validity.

I

Much experience of God, as men have felt or believed themselves to have it, has had—it must be confessed at the outset—quite other aims than the development of personality. This is indeed true on the whole of the great non-Christian religions of the present, except that form of Judaism which stands close to Christianity. And in the Christian religion itself the conscious aim has often been indifferent or hostile to the development of personality. Nevertheless I think it can be shown that the experience of God has proven itself capable of being a powerful force to this end, so that in Christianity at least it is coming more and more to have this end as one of its chief

conscious aims. We shall look to the Hebrew and Christian religions as the most hopeful sources of evidence that such is indeed the fact.

The most unique personal experiences of God in the Hebrew religion are those of the great prophets; and with the rebirth of prophecy at the beginning of Christianity the most characteristic personal religious experience is that of sonship to God. Now the significance of these types of experience for personal development is that they lift those who have them to the level of creative moral living. Amos, the herdsman and dresser of sycamore-trees, is transformed by his sense of the will of God into a preacher of social justice, a believer in internationalism from the ethical and religious standpoint, if not from the political, and a foremost teacher of ethical monotheism. Hosea, the victim of cruel domestic tragedy, is made by his sense of God's faithfulness into an interpreter of divine redemptive love for his nation. Isaiah, the courtier, is through his profound experience of God also the righteous statesman and the typical seer of his race. Jeremiah, the priest's son, becomes, through the burning fire

shut up in his bones, the one who detaches the faith in Jehovah from the temple and interprets it as an inward and personal religion. And though we have fewer biographical data from other prophets, the messages they bring give evidence of a like transforming experience. Moral creativity is clearly one of the most significant fruits of the prophetic consciousness.

But a fuller evidence of the moral creativeness of the prophetic consciousness is its power to propagate itself. Anonymous prophecy doubtless means, on the whole, a decline of the prophetic spirit, but in one sense it means its triumph. For it shows that the prophetic experience can spread through a variety of minds—some of them perhaps lesser minds, but all capable of a first-hand experience of God. Just as the anonymous work in many of our great State documents proves that statesmanship is a co-operative matter, so anonymous prophecy proves that the prophetic consciousness is more widely sharable than we sometimes have supposed. And with the great anonymous prophet of the exile comes the conception of Israel as a prophet nation. Thus the prophet's divine call was extended

to any that had ears to hear; and that this call was apprehended and responded to by many, to be sure with varying degrees of clarity and vigor, is proven by the vitality of Jewish religious literature, whether in the form of prophecy, or apocalypse, or psalm, or gnomic poem.

While, however, the prophetic experience of God with its moral creativity persisted long through the clash of civilizations and the havoc of war, it gradually declined. Yet even in its decline it was vital enough to engender something greater than itself. With Jesus came a profoundly new experience of God and at the same time a wonderful new appreciation of human values and power to give those values vital embodiment. This new and greater form of prophecy expresses itself under the consciousness of sonship to God. And the outstanding characteristic of this consciousness of sonship is its union of an experience of God of new intimacy and depth with a moral creativity of the greatest scope and energy. This new religious and moral life of course makes use of many contemporary forms of thought, historical, psychological, theological—as for example the Messianic eschatol-

ogy—at the same time that it is bursting and abandoning other contemporary forms. And perhaps the attempt to distinguish between essence and form, with the idea that the essence is authoritative though the form is not, is a dubious one. But our point is simply this: that here at the beginning of Christianity is a spiritual process from which can be learned things of most vital moment for modern life. In Jesus' consciousness of sonship we see the experience of God making powerfully for the development of personality because it is so intimately united with moral creativity; and if the development of personality is a fundamental and permanent modern task, Jesus' consciousness of sonship may well retain for us the utmost significance.

This consciousness of sonship proved able to propagate itself with even greater vitality than the older prophetic consciousness. And this propagation is evidently the direct intention of Jesus. Indeed, he sets no limit to the extent to which he seeks to share his filial experience with others. Men are to become sons of God even to the extent of sharing in the great redemptive experience of love for one's enemies.

They are to become sons even to the extent of those words which President McGiffert has somewhere called the bravest that man ever spoke: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Here is limitless development of personality combined with the deepest experience of God, and it is hard to imagine how either could have come to pass without the other. For it is the sharing of the mind of the Father which gives the moral creativity, and without the moral creativity the mind of the Father is not really shared.

That the early Christians responded widely to Jesus's teaching and example of sonship the great New Testament writers make plain. From Paul we learn that the key-note of the early Christian's prayer was "*Abba*, Father"; and he himself interprets Christian conversion as adoption into sonship, and declares that: "As many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God." With Paul, too, as with Jesus, this sonship means the union of freedom and service—the freedom which can be realized only in service, and the service which can be accomplished only by free

men. Or, in the terms that we have been using, this experience of sonship to God means moral creativity. John likewise is interpreting essentially the same experience in those great sayings: "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God"; and, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are." And the meaning for the development of personality is again essentially the same—purifying the self, walking in the light, doing the works of God.

All too soon, it is true, the Christian experience of God ceased to be a consciousness of sonship. And one can hardly help thinking that with this change went a loss of moral creativity. Indeed, one of the important reasons for believing that Christianity has great development still ahead is that Christians are beginning to recover this consciousness of sonship in its deeper religious and moral meanings and without the traditional theological limitations which have resulted from marking a metaphysical boundary line between the sonship of Jesus and that of other men. At all events the

Christian experience of God has expressed itself chiefly in other ways and has had for the development of personality very various results.

But we have not undertaken the task, so utterly impossible at this time at least, of indicating all that the experience of God, even the Christian, may have meant for or against the development of personality. We are simply seeking evidence that the experience of God is capable of having great positive significance for such development. And we shall have to limit ourselves to a few instances which have an added meaning because they are comparatively close to the present and have influenced our modern world in significant ways.

One of the creative centres of American spiritual life is the personality of Horace Bushnell, and the inner explanation of this fact his biography shows to be his experience of God. Let me cite the most striking phase of that experience. "The year 1848," writes his wife—that is, when he was forty-six years old—"was the central point in the life of Horace Bushnell." "I believed," he himself said of the years just preceding, "that there is a higher,

fuller life that can be lived, and set myself to attain it." Months of study and spiritual seeking ensued. "On an early morning in February," his biography states, "his wife awoke, to hear that the light they had waited for, more than they that watch for the morning, had risen indeed. She asked, 'What have you seen?' He replied, 'The Gospel.' It came to him at last, after all his thought and study, not as something reasoned out, but as an inspiration—a revelation from the mind of God himself." Looking back on this experience Bushnell said: "I seemed to pass a boundary. I had never been very legal in my Christian life, but now I passed from those partial seeings, glimpses and doubts, into a clearer knowledge of God and into his inspirations, which I have never wholly lost. The change was into faith—a sense of the freeness of God and the ease of approach to him." And of the meaning of faith he elsewhere said: "It is not the committing of one's thought in assent to any proposition, but the trusting of one's being to a *being*, there to be rested, kept, guided, moulded, governed, and possessed forever." Of this experience his wife wrote: "The greatness

of this change and its profound reality made him a new man, or rather the same man with a heavenly investiture."[1] This judgment is borne out by the facts, for the greatest days of Bushnell's intellectual and spiritual productivity were still ahead of him. Of the power of this creative spiritual experience to propagate itself to others a single testimony must suffice. Doctor Washington Gladden has written of Bushnell: "I could not have remained in the ministry, an honest man, if it had not been for him. . . . If I have had any gospel to preach, during the last thirty-five years, it is because he led me into the light and joy of it."[2]

By the side of this instance of what the experience of God can mean for the development of personality let us place another, found in the life of one whose influence in England was in many respects very similar to that of Bushnell in America. James Martineau was a remarkable incarnation of that liberalism of which Newman was so fearful, but to which the

[1] *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell,* by Mary Bushnell Cheney, pp. 191-3.

[2] *Horace Bushnell : Preacher and Theologian,* by T. T. Munger, p. 375.

greatness of England during the last century was so largely due. Particular phases of this movement no doubt found sharper and more consistent expression in other great intellectual and political liberals of England. But Martineau was in singularly close relation with all its groups, and in its many-sidedness and inward meaning he is perhaps its best single embodiment.

What is the secret of this creative relation between Martineau and the spirit of England? We may venture to answer: his experience of God. The evidence of this, as with Bushnell, runs all through his biography, but no single experience concentrates it, as in Bushnell's case, in a dramatic moment. It however has received a unique expression in that wonderful product of his early career, *Endeavors after the Christian Life*. Throughout these rich meditations the autobiographical note is unmistakable. I cite a single passage from the chapter entitled "The Besetting God." After speaking of God in nature throughout space and time he turns characteristically to the moral consciousness: "But there is a *moral* presence of his Spirit to our minds which places us in relations

to him more intimate and sacred. Surely there occur to every uncorrupted heart some stirrings of a diviner life; some consciousness, obscure and transient it may be, but deep and authoritative, of a nobler calling than we have yet obeyed; a rooted dissatisfaction with self, a suspicion of some poison in the will, a helpless veneration for somewhat that is gazed at with a sigh as out of reach. It is the touch of God upon us; his heavy hand laid upon our conscience, and felt by all who are not numb with the paralytic twist of sin. Even the languid mind of self-indulgence, drowsy with too much sense, complacent with too much self, scarcely escapes the sacred warning. . . . And as for minds that are awake and in any wise in quest of him, he haunts them every way. O that we could but know it to be false that the good man is satisfied from himself! When was there ever one of us who did not feel his recollections full of shame and grief, and find in the past the cup that overflowed with tears? When one that did not look into the future with resolves made timid and anxious by the failures of experience, and distrust that breaks the high young courage of the heart,

and prayers that in utterance half-expect refusal? Which of us can stand this day at the solemn meeting-point of past and future, without abasement for the one, and trembling for the other?—without being beset by the divine Spirit in penitent regrets from behind, and in passionate aspirations from before? And herein we should discover only this: that he has laid his hand upon us; has resolved to claim us to the uttermost; and will haunt us with his rebukes, though they wither us with sorrow, till we surrender without terms."

In such a passage as this the notable thing is the way in which the experience of God and that of moral renewal and creative power interpenetrate. And this, expressed with varying shades of feeling—now solemn and now glad—is the distinctive note of Martineau. For him goodness and God are so related that neither merely dissolves into the other and yet each is inseparable from the other.

As a further instance of the relation between the experience of God and moral creativity we may take the personality of Albrecht Ritschl. The moral creativity of Ritschl was in one sense less, and in an-

other greater, than that of Bushnell or of Martineau. He touched life on fewer sides than they, and he lacked their imaginative and literary power; but his work was more sharply concentrated about a few constructive ideas, and he became the centre of a large and fairly definite school of thought —which was hardly true of the other two men. This Ritschlian movement, coming at a time when both speculative idealism and pietism in Germany had largely spent their force, has had so important an influence in ethicizing and socializing contemporary religion, both in Germany and in other lands, that originality and creative energy can hardly be denied to its author.

Ritschl was through and through a theologian. He was not the author of important devotional literature, and his biographer records no unique religious experiences. At first sight it might seem, therefore, as though he were merely the thinker about religion instead of the possessor of a first-hand experience of God. But a little closer examination of the matter makes plain that Ritschl was characterized by a religious experience of a singularly simple and rugged type. The most creative period

of his life centres about the year 1874, when the second and third volumes of his *Justification and Reconciliation* were published, and that same year he issued a pamphlet on *Christian Perfection* which is so succinct and comprehensive an interpretation of the Christian life as to furnish the clew for tracing his personal religion both in his biography and in his theological writings. What is this clew? It is that the experience of God and the moral life stand in the most intimate reciprocal relation. Christian perfection is the perfection of a finite and growing life which at the same time attains wholeness of character after its kind. This wholeness of character is attainable as man on the one hand gains mastery over the world, and on the other loyally dedicates himself to his ethical vocation in the service of the Kingdom of God. How distinctly ethical and social is Ritschl's conception of the Kingdom of God becomes apparent from his characterization of it in the *Justification and Reconciliation* as "the organization of humanity through action inspired by love," and also from his further statement—we of the new century should note this carefully—that "it rises above the

limits of nationality and becomes the moral society of nations."[1] Now this mastery over the world and this obedience to the principle of organizing human life through love are the very qualities which for Ritschl constitute the divinity of Jesus and the perfection of God himself. To be growing into them is to attain sonship to God, and the source of such growth is that relationship to God, in humility, faith, patience, and prayer, which we learn from the sonship of Jesus.

Around such simple, vital ethical and religious ideas Ritschl organized not only his thinking but his personal life. Loyalty to one's ethical vocation and rugged individuality mastering the conditions of life, under the sense of doing the will of God, are seldom better seen than in Ritschl. And if the humility which he declares to be the characteristic religious virtue often seems to be too little dominant in his life, this is partly because to him humility toward God means strenuous moral energy in conduct, and partly because—in reaction against pietistic pride in humility—he holds humility to be "the secret of the religious

[1] *Justification and Reconciliation*, pp. 10–12.

man with himself."[1] The psychology of religion which recognizes wide differences of temperament in religious experience will hardly deny the originality of Ritschl's experience of God, or its vital influence upon his personality and career.

To the American Bushnell, the English Martineau, the German Ritschl let us add, as evidence of the positive relation between experience of God and the development of personality, the Russian Tolstoi. The literary creativity of Tolstoi's earlier years does not explicitly connect itself with religious experience, but the moral creativity of his middle life and later years has in such experience its vital roots. And though it would be fruitless to guess which phase of Tolstoi's genius the future will value the more highly, in the vast crisis of the present it is certain that the moral phase looms up with the greater significance. For Tolstoi's teachings in their total influence are a powerful ferment for democracy. Note, for example, his challenge to the science of our day. Political economy he declares should deal with but one question: "What is the cause and purpose of some people

[1] *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, sec. 52.

doing nothing and others working for them?" Historical science, too, should treat of only one question—"How the workers, that is nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of all mankind, lived?" So for jurisprudence the one essential question is: "Why do people exist who allow themselves to exercise violence toward other men, to rob, imprison, execute them, send them to wars, and much else?" Technical sciences should be directed solely to the end of "alleviating the labor of the people." Philosophy has but one problem to which it should address itself: "What am I to do?"[1] To be sure, political democracy was to his mind hardly more hopeful than any other form of the state. It was democracy based solely on universal religion, with its universal law of brotherhood, in which he put his faith. Nevertheless his ideas, incarnated as they were in his self-identification with the life of the common people in their toil, are proving a democratic yeast and are leavening society —and even the political institutions in which he disbelieved—in a startling and far-reaching way.

[1] *What is Religion?* pp. 28–31.

The religious experience which brought to birth the new moral creativity of Tolstoi's later life he recounts in his *Confession.* "I felt," he writes, "that something had broken within me on which my life had always rested, that I had nothing left to hold on to, and that morally my life had stopped."

"Behold me then . . . hiding the rope in order not to hang myself to the rafters of the room where every night I went to sleep alone; behold me no longer going shooting, lest I should yield to the too easy temptation of putting an end to myself with my gun."

"Then I turned my gaze upon myself, on what went on within me, and I remembered that I only lived at those times when I believed in God. As it was before, so it was now: I need only to be aware of God to live; I need only to forget him or disbelieve in him, to die. . . . 'What more do you seek?' exclaimed a voice within me. 'This is he. He is that without which one cannot live. To know God and to live is one and the same thing!' . . . And the light did not again abandon me."

"I returned to belief in that Will which produced me, and desires something of me.

I returned to the belief that the chief and only aim of my life is to be better, *i. e.*, to live in accord with that Will. And I returned to the belief that I can find the expression of that Will, in what humanity, in the distant past, hidden from me, has produced for its guidance: that is to say, I returned to a belief in God, in moral perfecting, and in a tradition transmitting the meaning of life."[1]

Thus the fact of the positive significance of the experience of God for the development of personality presents itself to us as being no less real in the modern world than in the distant times of the past. And it is a fact witnessed to not merely by a few isolated lives such as these four but by the self-propagating power of such experiences in other lives. Moral creativity passes from life to life and spreads out into social movements—just as the intellectual inventiveness of Edison or Marconi or the Wright brothers sets hundreds of others inventing and inaugurates a new age in the control of nature—and with moral creativity a consciousness of an experience of God is bound up.

[1] Aylmer Maude, *Life of Tolstoi*, vol. I, pp. 417–18.

But now there is one characteristic of the experience of God in the data before us which should be especially stressed if we are to realize the meaning of such experience for the development of personality. For, as we have already said, that which men feel or believe to be the experience of God may have quite other aims than that of developing personality, and even quite other results.

The characteristic referred to is the way in which, in the modes of religion that we are dealing with, the experience of God and that of moral creativity mutually penetrate each other. God is felt or believed to be a present fact of the inner life in proportion as creative moral energy is rising and maintaining itself within. The marks of his presence are moral renewal, new increments of moral insight and power, the ceaselessly growing moral life. Not that the sense or thought of God and of the self are simultaneously and continuously present in consciousness in such an experience. But when one feels that he is experiencing the presence of God, or judges that he has experienced him, the event so apprehended proves to be marked by moral creativeness. And the acme of this type of experience is

when one is engaged in some work that proves to be genuinely fruitful for the development of personality in others. To evoke moral originality in others is to feel the creative thrill that seems to pass from Jehovah's outstretched finger, in Michael Angelo's fresco, to the awakening Adam. It is to have a sense of being in contact with reality in a new and deeper way and of functioning harmoniously with it. So with the preacher expression and insight often come in the same flash. The teacher often finds that the successful imparting of truth brings with it fresh discovery. The parent knows that as he reverently tries to guide the development of his child's personality he is deepening his own relation to the principles of existence. The statesman, as he is forced by great responsibility to think and act for his people in new ways, experiences a corresponding enlargement of personal powers and finds himself gaining a new grasp upon the laws of life. Or if in such experiences the state of mind is too largely objective to permit these apprehensions of their meaning, then afterward one judges: "At those times of work for the unfolding of human lives I lived most deeply. The

deeper facts and the greater values met right here in my soul in some new and constructive way. I experienced God."

This then is the great meaning and value that the experience of God is capable of having for the development of personality. It can interpenetrate with the experience of moral creativity in such a way as to further that experience. It can either give birth to new creative powers, or it can in turn be reborn from them, so that the total effect becomes a sustaining, fostering, and enlarging of spiritual originality, a new growth of personal life. And this is simply the old religious paradox which must be experienced afresh whenever religion rises to these higher levels—in losing one's life for others there is a new finding; working out our own salvation means God working his own will within us; in service is the true freedom, and only the free can truly serve; the true greatness is humility, but he only is humble who courageously does the will of God.

Even without a conscious recognition of this paradox its fruits for life may come to pass. An experience of God which has other aims than the development of personality may yet produce such develop-

ment; and certainly great creative powers have not infrequently appeared in persons who possessed no conscious experience of God. But if the paradox is sufficiently grounded in reality, the conscious recognition of it, and the shaping of life in harmony with it, should be matters of vital importance. And to an age for which the development of personality has become a momentous problem, and which at the same time is reaching out in new ways after religion, we can say: There is an experience of God which makes for the development of personality because it interpenetrates in a vitalizing way with the experience of moral creativity.

II

But if the religious paradox is to have the meaning and value for modern life of which we have been speaking it must be adequately grounded in reality. For in the modes of religion that we have brought before ourselves, the objective and the subjective aspects, while they interpenetrate, by no means completely merge. The experience of God does not dissolve into that of moral creativeness, but is felt to be also

a functioning in relation with a superhuman moral power. There is no question that this is true in the case of the prophetic consciousness of the Old Testament or the filial consciousness of the New; but it is also true of those men whose lives touch so influentially our own time. Bushnell, as we have seen, regarded faith as "the trusting of one's being to *a being*." Martineau has expressly defined religion as belief in "a Divine Mind and Will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind."[1] Ritschl's experience of mastery over the world and fidelity to an ethical vocation is conditioned upon a filial relation to a Power upon whom the entire world-order depends and who is working to accomplish a universal moral order among men. Tolstoi, although he is much more pantheistic in his thinking than any of these others, vigorously challenges the idea that religion can be dissolved into morality and science, and interprets the Infinite Will by the ethical teachings of Jesus, as he understands them. God, as an objective reality as well as an inward experience of moral creativity, is

[1] *A Study of Religion*, vol. I, p. 1.

unmistakably felt and believed to be present in these modes of religion which promise real meaning and value for modern life.

Now let us disregard the particular intellectual setting given by each of these men to their experience of objective divine reality, and let us try to find an equivalent for that experience for ourselves, as men facing an environment and a future already different from theirs in certain momentous ways. We are bound to do this, first of all, because all our thinking to-day must be in terms of evolution—an idea which in its modern sense had not been fully assimilated by any of these thinkers. And we are justified in doing this, because the most distinguishing mark of this objective divine reality is that it relates itself so vitally to moral creativeness. Putting this equivalent in a single phrase we may say: the religion that promises most for the development of personality is an experience of being *coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will.* This is an experience which relates itself not to a world ready-made but to a world in the making, not to a world that as a whole is good or ever was good but to a world that is becoming good; it denotes

not a God who once was the author of creation or of a plan of salvation, but a God who all through the time process and at this present moment is creating new facts and new values, and whose moral energies are ceaselessly going forth to eliminate evil from the world and to organize every bit of mind that exists into a spiritual universe; it involves a conception of man as revealing, when he rises to the heights of moral creativity, the deepest mystery of existence, and as capable of being a sharer in the creative and redemptive work of God. In its great characteristics it is expressed in the wonderful eighth chapter of Romans, and particularly in its closing words, so meaningful for the present hour: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." But it is an experience which, if sufficiently grounded in reality, must be ever renewing its forms of expression and ever taking on new meanings through the ages.

But in the minds of some of our leading psychologists of religion this experience of being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will is lacking in validity. In particular Leuba, in his *Psychological Study of Religion*, takes such a position. "The religion of the future," he asserts, "will have to rest content apparently with the idea of a non-purposive Creative Force, making of the universe neither an accidental creation nor one shaped in accordance with some preconceived plan." He recognizes, it is true, a legitimate need for a conception of "the transhuman Force of which humanity is an expression," but he rejects the thought of this Force as Purposive Intelligence because that would land us back in theism, the error of which he feels that he has shown. He rejects, too, the Christian conception of a Father God, on the ground that "belief in the Christian God rests no longer upon the wonders of the physical universe, nor upon metaphysical arguments, but upon certain inner experiences,"[1] and that this belief is substantiated by modern theology only by withdrawing these experiences from psychological

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 232.

analysis and arbitrarily giving them finality.[1] But he holds that "A religion in agreement with the accepted body of scientific knowledge, and centred about Humanity conceived as the manifestation of a Force tending to the creation of an ideal society, would occupy the place that a religion should normally hold—even the place that the Christian religion lost when its cardinal beliefs ceased to be in harmony with secular beliefs."[2]

The issue raised by Leuba, then, is between religion involving belief in a Purposive Intelligence with whom one can have a spiritual relation analogous to the human social relation—that is, the Father God of Christianity—and a cult of "Humanity idealized and conceived as a manifestation of [non-purposive] Creative Energy."[3] Thus on the basis of an inductive psychological study of religion Leuba challenges at a vital point the experience of God which consists in being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will. One important difference, however, must be noted between the issue as Leuba states it and as it develops out of the

[1] *Cf. op. cit.*, chap. XI.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 336.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 335.

study we are making. It is not simply a Purposive Intelligence of which we are speaking but a Creative Intelligence; not a Providence working only according to an eternally fixed plan but a Creative Moral Intelligence both working toward the realization of his purposes and creating new purposes. Nevertheless the issue in its religious meaning remains largely the same. It is the old and fundamental issue of the personality of God, simply adapted to evolutionary thought and to certain new ethical values. For, as William James wrote: "In whatever other respects the divine personality may differ from ours or may resemble it, the two are consanguineous at least in this—that both have purposes for which they care, and each can hear the other's call."[1]

The importance of this issue is shown by the fact that the shock to our conception of humanity produced by the war is causing many to react from the idea of an impersonal non-purposive God, not indeed toward an omnipotent Providence who has mysteriously planned all that happens, but toward a personal God, purposive and creative even

[1] *The Will to Believe*, p. 122.

though finite. In fact, it is held by some that he must be finite, in order not to be the author of the colossal evils of humanity. But to the values involved in this issue we shall be returning in the following lecture; and Leuba himself seems almost to admit the superior practical value of Christian theism over the more pantheistic view.[1] His objection is rather that Christian theism is illogical and arbitrarily derived from the facts of religious psychology, and on this objection his whole argument rests; for he says little to justify the idea of "a non-purposive Creative Force."

Now let us freely grant Leuba's contention that no inner experiences can legitimately be withdrawn from the analysis of the psychologist of religion, and let us admit also that modern theology often has done this and so has given a fictitious "finality" to its results. Our question then becomes that of the legitimate interpretation of the consciousness of being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will—making use of any facts or values from the psychology of religion which may throw light upon it, arbitrarily excluding none, and holding

[1] *Cf. op. cit.*, p. 291.

both data and results open to further analysis.

William James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, discusses "the Reality of the Unseen," and he begins by pointing out how ideas may produce in us the feeling of reality just as truly as objects of sense. This they do when, like objects of sense, they determine our practical attitudes and elicit reactions from us of sufficient intensity and range. And he gives abundant evidence to show how religious ideas have this property to a peculiar degree. "It is," he writes, "as if there were in the human consciousness a *sense of reality, a feeling of objective presence, a perception* of what we may call 'something there,' more deep and more general than any of the special and particular 'senses' by which the current psychology supposes existent realities to be originally revealed. If this were so," he continues, "we might suppose the senses to waken our attitudes and conduct as they so habitually do, by first exciting this sense of reality; but anything else, any idea, for example, that might similarly excite it, would have that same prerogative of appearing real which objects of sense normally

possess. So far as religious conceptions were able to touch this reality feeling, they would be believed in spite of criticism."[1]

Now in the type of religion with which we are here concerned—the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will—that which most profoundly stimulates this reality sense is the experience of moral creativeness. That is to say, in this type of religion the process of discovering values and reconstructing facts in accordance with those values—which is what moral creativity means—is felt to be more real than the facts taken by themselves. It is felt to be the fullest contact between the individual soul and the environing world. Moral creativity in the human personality presents itself as continuous with a greater moral creativity in the universe at large. When original moral power is finding expression in us, and when we are aiding in calling forth the like in others, we most truly live, we are most real, and at the same time we are most harmoniously related to the wider reality on which we all depend.

Such is the testimony of the type of religion before us, and upon it rests the first

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 58.

point in our argument for the objective validity of the experience of an Eternal Creative Good Will. Not that such testimony can be accepted uncritically. On the contrary it will mean little for modern life unless it will stand criticism. Our point here is simply this. Like every other attitude toward life the attitude of religious faith centres in some experience or function which has a peculiar power to stimulate the sense of reality. For the naturalistic attitude it is the objects of the physical senses which do this most successfully; for optimism it is feelings of happiness; for pessimism those of pain; for authority religion it is fixity of spiritual institutions and ideas; for mysticism it is experiences of ecstasy; for the type of religious faith we are dealing with it is moral creativity. Each of these attitudes must subject itself to the fullest testing and criticism from all sides of experience if it is to offer itself as a philosophy of life for the modern world, but no criticism would be adequate which did not penetrate to the organizing centre of the several systems, namely, the elements in experience which most effectively stimulate the reality sense.

But some one may object at this point: Are you not, in employing this term "the reality sense," accepting as an ultimate datum something that itself is susceptible of psychological analysis? We may rejoin, however, that nothing in our argument depends upon this sense of reality being unanalyzable. James himself has suggested something in the nature of an analysis in the conjecture which he makes as to the organic seat of this reality feeling. "Nothing," he says, "could be more natural than to connect it with the muscular sense, with the feeling that our muscles were innervating themselves for action. Whatsoever thus innervated our activity, or 'made our flesh creep'—our senses are what do so oftenest—might then appear real and present, even though it were an abstract idea."[1] But the point for us now is that this reality feeling, whether further analyzable or not, inevitably enters as a relatively simple element into all our more comprehensive attitudes toward life, and hence is a legitimate part of their claim to convincingness.

But this fact—that moral creativity is ca-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

pable of arousing in a unique way the reality sense and so of furnishing a clew for the interpretation of the universe—if left to itself would not go far toward establishing the objective validity of the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will. The completion of the argument, indeed, will require the discussions of the two following lectures, which are to deal with the relation of the experience of God to social progress and to cosmic evolution. But a further step can be taken here in closing the discussion of our data taken from the psychology of personal religion. Professor Coe, in his recent *Psychology of Religion*, has arrived at a result which is important for our thought at this point. "It is of the utmost significance," he says, "that, whenever one takes an absorbing interest in any particular thing or enterprise, one idealizes it, organizes other interests about it, and thus finds one's real world partly by having a share in making it real. This way of organizing experience in terms of ideal values is a first item in the religious nature of man."[1] Now if this be true there is something in the very nature of religion, making it possible for it to

[1] P. 324.

test, to verify, to criticise, and to reconstruct its own ideas. At all events, this is what a philosophy of religion must do. It must test all religious ideas by their capacity to organize experience. Now in the inquiry which we already have made into the meaning and value of the consciousness of God for modern life we have found a type of that consciousness which has great capacity for organizing experience in that it makes for the development of personality, and working through one personality is a powerful aid in calling forth personality in others. But it is precisely the blending of a supreme value—moral creativity—and the reality sense which gives to this consciousness its organizing power. The consciousness of God and an experience of moral creativity interpenetrate, and thereby the personality as a whole becomes newly organized and enters into a more harmonious and persistent development. One has an experience of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will, and the accompanying development of personality, together with the power of this development to propagate itself to others, is a partial verification of the reality of that kind of God.

Now let us be very specific about the

nature of the argument we are making. The fact that a great value powerfully stimulates the reality sense simply gives us a working hypothesis; but this is the legitimate first step, which any philosophy of life must take. The power of this working hypothesis to organize and fructify experience is its verification, and a partial verification has already been produced in the development of personality which this working hypothesis fosters. This verification helps to raise the hypothesis to the level of a reasonable theory. It is of course no *a priori* demonstration of God which this kind of reasoning will yield, but simply a reasoned interpretation of experience. But on the other hand we are aiming to avoid the error, charged by Leuba against modern theology, of giving arbitrary finality to certain inner experiences by isolating them from the rest of experience. By the method we are following the apprehension of values and their verification move along together, as a tractor advances upon its own caterpillar track. This may not mean intellectual rapid transit, but it is perhaps a good way of getting into new country.

But the view which we are developing

does not simply stand alongside that of Leuba as a legitimate rival theory. For it presents a higher value than Leuba's view and is capable of completer verification. From the standpoint of value a Non-Purposive Creative Force is most inadequate, since even with man the purposive development of life is actually taking place on an important scale. To think of God as being unqualified for this highest of human functions can hardly be an inspiration to faith. And the verification for the idea of a Creative Moral Intelligence is greater than that for a Non-Purposive Creative Force to all who find that the progress of the human race in the past, and that hoped for in the future, is *proportionate to the exercise of mind* in discovering values and realizing them in facts. A Non-Purposive Creative Force is like a blind Samson, able to triumph over the Philistines only by pulling the temple down upon them and upon himself. A Creative Moral Intelligence is like the pioneer who compels his very obstacles in the wilderness to furnish the material for a new civilization.

Thus to an age that is reaching out after a new religion, under a desperate sense of

overwhelming unsolved problems, we may make this response, which our other discussions will seek more fully to justify: there is a religion in the world which has self-renewing and self-reconstructive power and which affords a solution of one of the most fundamental problems of our confused and aching time—the problem of developing personality. It is not the religion of any institution, though it can mould institutions. It is not the religion of any authoritative creed, though it can produce great guiding convictions. It is not the religion of a revelation finished in the remote past, though it has its roots deep in the past. It is the religion of the Hebrew prophetic consciousness, of Jesus' filial consciousness, of the modern Christian experience of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will.

II

THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

THE idea of social progress made the first thirteen years of the twentieth century a period of great exhilaration. The nineteenth century had brought men a marvellous control over nature, and in the new century society as a whole was beginning to reap the benefits. The vast accumulations of wealth which machinery and industrial organization had made possible were becoming available in new ways for the common welfare. The general diffusion of education which political liberalism had brought about had awakened the collective mind and had set the masses of the people to thinking about the improvement of their own condition. Humanity was like a pioneer family, which, after a long struggle to subdue the wilderness and make it productive, is beginning to take a more direct and conscious interest in its own intellectual and social advancement. Each of us, as we felt the pulses of new life moving in the

social order about us, must have faced the future with fresh alertness and zest.

The rapidity with which this idea of social progress was permeating humanity was indeed remarkable. Professor Ross, of Wisconsin University, discussing "the world-wide advance of democracy," wrote in 1912: "Within six years we have seen the creation of parliaments in Turkey, Russia, Persia, and China, the birth of a republic in Portugal and in China, the overthrow of 'Diaz-potism' in Mexico, the startling spread of unrest in India, and the growth of political socialism in all Western countries." [1] And this development was no less remarkable in its intensive than its extensive aspect. Said Professor Rauschenbusch, returning in 1908 from a year in Europe: "Meanwhile the social awakening of our nation had set in like an equinoctial gale in March, and . . . I found myself caught in the tail of the storm. . . . Men asked: 'What must we do? And what must we undo? What social ideal should guide us? What methods can we safely use in realizing it?'" [2] Indeed one has only

[1] *Changing America*, p. 21.
[2] *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. vii.

to enumerate a few of the matters that were agitating the public mind—initiative, referendum, and recall, the short ballot, conservation, child labor, progressive taxation of inheritances and incomes, government of cities by commission or manager, arbitration of industrial disputes, playgrounds, rural betterment, eugenics, social hygiene, feminism—one has only to make such a random list to realize how far into the old social order the virus of progressive ideas had penetrated. Progressivism had become a political creed, a philosophy, almost a religion.

And then came the Great War upon us, and we began to perceive that all this social awakening had arrived too late—at least too late to proceed by any process of normal evolution. Rapidly as the spirit of social progress was spreading, it could not cope with the long-accumulated mass of social problems. For seventy-five years most of the best minds had been occupied with the material development of the world and comparatively few had concerned themselves with social reconstruction. Physical invention had outrun moral invention. Organization for business had altogether

surpassed organization for living. International trade had flourished like a green bay-tree and international ethics had languished like a sickly vegetable underneath. The agents of exploiting syndicates were backed up far more consistently in their projects than the missionaries of the kingdom of God. And thus had arisen a condition of tension in the old social order at countless points—between races, nationalities, diplomats, tariffs, banking syndicates, and military and naval strategists; between property and the proletariat, the home and the shop, the franchised and the disfranchised, the standpatters and the muck-rakers—while to the relief of these points of tension had come only a few spasmodic reform movements and the tentative programmes of a few detached social thinkers. What wonder, then, that the social awakening at the opening of the century brought to many of us the exhilaration of a great hope! And what wonder that it came too late!

I once saw a conflagration rage through a city. The whole population mobilized itself to fight the flames, and every one "did his bit," but in an afternoon and a

night the heart of the city was eaten out. The fire was said to have started from the sparks of a tobacco-pipe dropped by some men who were gambling and drinking in a ramshackle, empty warehouse. But every thoughtful citizen knew that the deeper causes were lax building laws still more laxly enforced, fat rentals from flimsy buildings, and lack of civic spirit necessary to make an efficient city government and to grasp the new needs of a prosperous and growing city. Some such event as this is required, I believe, to symbolize the outbreak of the present world disaster. It started, in one sense, of course, from the pistol-shot of the boy revolutionist in a little Bosnian town, but in a deeper sense it sprang from the inflammable material of unsolved social problems tolerated among the solid structures of civilization because the spirit of social progress had been allowed to slumber so long.

At all events probably no one to-day will deny that social progress is, for us, not a swiftly unfolding and self-operating movement, but a tragically complicated and baffling problem. The ideal, indeed, has established itself in our minds. We have

dreamed the dream of a vast social reconstruction; and we have even conceived reconstruction to be, not an abnormal event to remedy abnormal evils, but a normal continuing process by which evils should be prevented from arising. But what are the socializing forces which can set the ideal in operation, along what lines shall the reconstruction proceed, and what is to sustain and inspire humanity in the endless task? Such are some of the features of the problem of social progress which is bewildering the mind of the world to-day, and which is causing that groping after a new religion mentioned in the previous discussion. It is in relation, then, to this intensest of present problems that we are to-day to consider the significance of the experience of God. Continuing the plan of the previous lecture we shall consider, first, what meaning and value for social progress the experience of God may have, and then what evidence for the validity of the experience of God may be afforded by social progress.

I

When one asks for the meaning and value of the experience of God for social progress one is confronted by the fact that some earnest thinkers hold that there is none—at least for enlightened minds. And in taking this position they have in view not simply the influence of the dogmatic creeds, which liberal theology itself has long since subjected to radical criticism, but the simple Christian faith in a Father God. This faith, they say, not only has no positive value to enlightened minds for social progress, but from the standpoint of the highest values is subtly deleterious.

Professor H. A. Overstreet has given expression to this view in a recent article in *The Forum*, entitled "New Loyalties for Old Consolations." [1] He writes: "I remember at the time of the San Francisco earthquake passing one of the cathedrals of the city and finding its broad, stone steps, covering a goodly portion of a city square, black with kneeling worshippers. There could be no question of their reason for being there. They were setting them-

[1] Vol. 52, pp. 499 *ff.*

selves right with their God, hoping that in the fervor of their devotion he would have mercy upon them and save them from destruction." In contrast to these Overstreet says: "Other men and women were distributing bread and clothing to destitute families, or were building shelters, or were clearing the streets of débris, or were patrolling with gun on shoulder against criminal disorder." And farther on he sums up his thought as follows: "Is it unfair to say that the old religion with its confident, childlike resting on God ('He loves the burthen') developed a type of character that was not, in the mass, conspicuously heroic? 'God knows best'; 'It will all come out right'; 'Thy will be done'—these are not expressions of fighting men; they are expressions of men who resign themselves to the ruling of powers greater than themselves. A civilization characterized by such an attitude will not be strenuously alive to eliminate the sorry evils of life. But the men who believe that the issue of the universe is in doubt, that there is no powerful God to lead the hosts to victory, will, if they have the stuff of men in them, strike out their manliest to help whatever good there is in the world to win its way

against the forces of evil. A civilization of such men will be a tough-fibred civilization, strenuous to fight, grimly ready, like the Old Guard, to die but never surrender." "There is," he concludes, "something subtly weakening about the optimism of the traditional religions. Like the historic soothing syrup, with its unadvertised opiate, it soothes the distress not by curing the disease, but by temporarily paralyzing the function. 'To trust God nor be afraid' means in most cases—not all—to settle back from a too anxious concern about the evils of the world. 'God will take care of his own!' How different is this from the attitude: 'The task is ours and the whole world's and we must see it through!'"

A view similar to this is taken by some of the well-known leaders of the Ethical Culture movement. Doctor Felix Adler, writing from a standpoint less sharply contrasted with theism than Overstreet's, nevertheless says: "Shall we then continue to think of a benignant and omnipotent Spirit bending down toward us from on high, whose face, indeed, may sometimes be veiled, but the light of whose love is never extinguished or diminished; to whom we can ever come as children saying: 'Father,

protect us; Father, deliver us; Father, forgive us our trespasses'?" Doctor Adler holds that the modern man no longer can use such terms, and he considers it better that he cannot. For, he says, "Life is a fight. We must take our part in it—the man's part. We must get rid of the notion that the affairs of the universe are managed with a view to securing our private benefit; that Fate, or the Power that overrules Fate, is disposed to coddle us."[1] So W. M. Salter, writing of "The Basis of the Ethical Movement," says: "To go straight to the heart of the matter, men have heretofore conceived of the Supreme Power of the world as a personal being like themselves. Many to-day, on the other hand, are constrained to regard the personality of the Deity as an open question, and prayer as a useless expenditure of human energy. . . . Prayer seems almost a belittling of that solemn mystery in the bosom of which we and the wide world rest. For it is not . . . in the name of materialism or phenomenalism, but because of a deeper sense of that mystery, that I abandon prayer."[2]

[1] *The Religion of Duty*, pp. 46, 47, 59.
[2] *Ethical Religion*, pp. 288–9.

The classic expression of the central point involved was given by Guyau in his *Non-Religion of the Future;* although he goes somewhat beyond the thinkers just mentioned in that he rejects not only theism and the positivist's religion of Humanity, but also all attempts to think out for the future a new religion, and puts his faith solely in an idealistic sociology. I quote but a sentence: "The substitution of a human providence for the omnipresent influence of a divine providence might be given as being, from this point of view, the formula of progress." [1]

Now these thinkers are all imbued with that loyalty to the ideal of social progress which we have seen meant a new awakening of soul for the modern world, and which any religion that is to serve our time must promote; and yet they see in the Christian faith in a Father God something that, though fine and noble as compared with most forms of religion, nevertheless falls short of the best. They regard it as a sedative rather than a tonic, as a message of solace instead of a rallying-cry. They consider that its tendency is to inhibit the full

[1] *Idem*, p. 450.

development of the moral nature, whereas they want a philosophy of life which concentrates upon science, upon human effort, upon social enterprise.

First of all, in considering this position, we should recognize that it is only a reconstructed form of the Christian experience of God that can hope to stand against these criticisms. Many of the strictures on contemporary religion that have just been quoted need to be carefully weighed. They certainly are justified so far as the ideas that give form to religious experience have not been thoroughly thought through in relation to modern truth and modern needs. One cannot simply take over the metaphysical attributes of God, nor even the moral attributes, which were constructed in a world of thought radically different from our own, without producing an experience of God that in some respects will be less than the best. Brave men rightly object to fighting with antiquated equipment. So earnest social workers will simply drop by the roadside implements of thought which merely hamper them in their great offensive campaign. The idea of God must be remoulded in the light of our

newer ethical values and of evolutionary philosophy, if it is to make a real contribution to the solution of our urgent modern problems.

But it was such a reconstructed form of the Christian experience that was intended in the first lecture when we spoke of the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will. Those who have this consciousness put effort, the development of personality, moral creativity, in the forefront of their thinking, and they are ready to face an imperfect but growing universe and to bear their part in its risks, its sacrifices, and its toils. And yet, notwithstanding these reconstructions, the issue raised by Overstreet and the others, in one important sense, remains. For we have held the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will to be but the modern equivalent of the prophetic and the filial consciousness, and the idea of God involved is of One who is real and objective as well as ideal and immanent. Moreover, to this idea of God personality is applicable. For, while the Eternal Creative Good Will is vastly different from human personality in many ways, yet, to use

James's words again, the two are akin at least in this: "That each has purposes for which he cares and each can hear the other's call." It is a vital question, then, whether a religious experience that is bound up with this idea of God will make a positive contribution toward solving the problem of social progress or will subtly hinder such a solution.

Now if we bring before ourselves clearly the largest issue upon which men's thinking divides to-day, it will become evident, I believe, that social progress is vitally bound up with the experience of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will. *The largest issue confronting our time is between an aristocratic, deterministic, nationalistic ethics and the ethics of democracy, of moral freedom, and of internationalism.* In other words, it is the issue between the interests of selected, privileged, and in some respects superior groups bent upon maintaining the fixity of inherited ideals, and the interests of aspiring humanity bent upon the reconstruction and expansion of all its ideals. On the one side the autocrat, the captain of industry, the empire-builder, the dogmatist, the ecclesiastical prince, administering the world's

affairs—perhaps benevolently, always authoritatively; on the other side the mass of humanity, struggling up through the sense of individual liberty, through "class consciousness," to race consciousness, and beginning to insist upon doing its own thinking, upon finding out for itself the real laws of the universe, and upon shaping the world according to its own deepest needs.

To bring this issue more fully before us let me give a few citations from outstanding representatives of contemporary modes of thinking. For the meaning of aristocratic ethics in the modern world we look, of course, to Nietzsche. He sees the supreme social issue as follows: "It is necessary for *higher* men to declare war upon the masses! In all directions mediocre people are joining hands in order to make themselves masters. Everything that pampers, that softens, and that brings the 'people' or 'woman' to the front, operates in favor of universal suffrage—that is to say, the dominion of *inferior* men."[1] For the superman, he says, "the rest of mankind is but the soil on which he can devise his higher

[1] *Will to Power*, vol. II, sec. 861.

mode of existence."[1] Over against this standpoint we may place that of democratic ethics, as expressed by Rauschenbusch. He writes: "We are told that democracy has proved a failure. It has, in so far as it was crippled and incomplete. Political democracy without economic democracy is an uncashed promissory note, a pot without a roast, a form without substance. But in so far as democracy has become effective it has quickened everything it has touched. . . . Democracy has even quickened the moral conscience of the upper classes. . . . What aristocracy calls hereditary rights, a democracy calls scandalous graft." "Democracy is the archangel whom God has sent to set his blazing foot on these icebergs of human pride and melt them down."[2]

Parallel with the contrast between aristocratic and democratic ethics we may place that between determinism and moral freedom. Not that the individual thinker is always both aristocrat and determinist, or democrat and libertarian; but in their larger social effects the two contrasts tend to become one. If Nietzsche protests

[1] *Idem*, sec. 866.
[2] *Christianizing the Social Order*, pp. 353, 354, 364.

against determinism in the interests of the superman, his doctrine remains deterministic for the masses of the people. If the socialist's creed includes economic determinism, the larger democratic movement aims at creative personality for every man.

No better representative of the deterministic point of view, in respect to popular influence, can be found than Haeckel. "The great struggle," he declares, "between the determinist and the indeterminist, between the opponent and the sustainer of the freedom of the will, has ended to-day, after more than two thousand years, completely in favor of the determinist. The human will has no more freedom than that of the higher animals, from which it differs only in degree, not in kind. . . . The character of the inclination was determined long ago by *heredity* from parents and ancestors; the determination to each particular act is an instance of *adaptation* to the circumstances of the moment wherein the strongest motive prevails, according to the laws which govern the statics of emotion."[1] With this fatalism goes not only his rejection of theism but his gross distortion of

[1] *Riddle of the Universe*, pp. 130–1.

Christianity, including its ethics. To be sure he accepts the Golden Rule. But he also says: "The supreme mistake of Christian ethics, and one which runs directly counter to the Golden Rule, is its exaggeration of love. . . . One of the Christian precepts that were impressed upon us in our early youth as of great importance, and that are glorified in millions of sermons, is 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' It is a very ideal precept, but as useless in practice as it is unnatural."[1] Such an attitude throws aside the redemptive and progressive power of Christian social ethics and tends to reduce social relations to a mechanical and static level.

In contrast to this we may take the ethical standpoint of William James, which is adopted on the basis of his well-known belief in indeterminism. "The deepest difference," he says, "in the moral life of man is the difference between the easy-going and the strenuous mood. The capacity for the strenuous mood probably lies slumbering in

[1] *Idem*, p. 353.

every man, but it has more difficulty in some than in others in waking up. It needs the wilder passions to arouse it, the big fears, loves, and indignations; or else the deeply penetrating appeal of some one of the higher fidelities, like justice, truth, or freedom. This is why, in a merely human world without a God, the appeal to our moral energy falls short of its maximum stimulating power. Life, to be sure, is even in such a world a genuinely ethical symphony; but it is played in the compass of a couple of poor octaves, and the infinite scale of values fails to open up. When, however, we believe that a God is there, and that he is one of the claimants, the infinite perspective opens out. The scale of the symphony is incalculably prolonged. The more imperative ideals now begin to speak with an altogether new objectivity and significance, and to utter the penetrating, shattering, tragically challenging note of appeal. All through history, in the periodical conflicts of puritanism with the don't-care temper, we see the antagonism of the strenuous and genial moods, and the contrast between the ethics of infinite and mysterious obligation from on high,

and those of prudence and the satisfaction of merely finite need. Our attitude toward concrete evils is entirely different in a world where we believe there are none but finite demanders, from what it is in one where we joyously face tragedy for an infinite Demander's sake. Every sort of energy and endurance, of courage and capacity for handling life's evils, is set free in those who have religious faith. For this reason the strenuous type of character will on the battle-field of human history always outwear the easy-going type, and religion will drive irreligion to the wall." [1] In such words as these the ethics of faith and moral freedom, essentially Christian in its redemptive and progressive quality, rings out with inspiring and convincing power.

But parallel to these contrasts between aristocratic and democratic ethics, and between the ethics of determinism and that of moral freedom we have placed the contrast between the ethics of nationalism and that of internationalism, and we must add brief examples from representatives of these two attitudes. A philosophy of history

[1] From "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life," in *The Will to Believe*, pp. 211-13, much abridged.

which has the effect of justifying nationalism has been worked out by Houston Stewart Chamberlain in his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Chamberlain holds that modern civilization is due to the Teutons, meaning thereby not only the Germans but the Anglo-Saxons, the Franks, and the people of northern Europe in general so far as their blood has not been corrupted by intermingling with other stocks than the Teutonic. The essential point for understanding civilization is that of purity of stock. The Greeks brought forth classical culture because of their purity of stock, but the Roman Empire hindered the rise of modern civilization by producing a "chaos of peoples" around the Mediterranean, and by bequeathing the idea of the Holy Roman Empire to northern Europe. Christianity also hindered it by the idea of the oneness of humanity and by producing the Roman Catholic Church, which assumed to transcend lines of nationality—Jesus, however, is claimed for modern civilization by a curious theory that he was not of Semitic but of Aryan stock. The Renaissance also, instead of being the beginning of modern civilization, hindered its coming through its

vague humanitarianism. But now at last a characteristic civilization is being worked out by the Teutons, and the thing of most importance for the furtherance of this civilization is to recognize this principle of purity of stock. The ethical significance of this position comes out in such words as the following: "So soon as we speak of *humanity* in general, so soon as we indulge in the fancy that we discern in history a development, a progress, an education of 'mankind,' we leave the sure ground of facts and float off into airy abstractions. This humanity, about which men have philosophized so much, suffers from the grave defect that it does not exist at all. Nature and history present us with a great number of different types of men, but not with *one* humanity."[1] So strong is Chamberlain's emphasis upon distinctions of racial stock that he declares: "The hunter through sympathy understands more of the soul of his dog, and the dog more of the soul of his master, than that same master understands of the soul of the Chinese, with whom he may be out hunting."

Over against such a standpoint we may

[1] Vol. II, p. 837.

place the words of a man who is perhaps the greatest single force for internationalism in this warring world, John R. Mott. The missionary enterprise, he affirms, "must ever be looked upon as but a means to the mighty and inspiring object of enthroning Christ in individual life, in family life, in national life, in international relations, in every relationship of mankind."[1]

Now just as aristocracy means determinism from the standpoint of the masses of men, and democracy means moral freedom, so aristocracy and determinism together naturally make common cause with nationalism, which tends to give finality to existing political, economic, and cultural groupings, and democracy and moral freedom make common cause with internationalism, which would provide for the progressive reconstruction of all such groupings. Hence the contrasts which we have drawn between individual thinkers are parts of *one dominating contrast which is fundamental for our age—the contrast between the ethics of privilege and the ethics of progress*, or the contrast between an aristocratic, deterministic, nationalistic ethics and the ethics of

[1] *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation*, p. 16.

democracy, of moral freedom, and of internationalism. And this contrast is essentially the one drawn long ago by Jesus, when he said: "Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all."

But the point of especial importance to us at this time is that each of these types of ethics is supported by a characteristic world view. The world view which supports the aristocratic ethics is that of naturalism. Nietzsche's doctrine is definitely atheistic. "Dead are all the gods," he cries; "now let the Superman live!" And his whole philosophy of the "will to power" rests upon an interpretation of evolution in which the struggle for existence is the last word. Haeckel considers that he has reduced the Christian idea of God to a piece of outgrown anthropomorphism, "a gaseous vertebrate," to use his own term, and eliminated him. Chamberlain, it is true, makes much of Christ, of personality,

and of creative genius, but he subordinates them all so completely to the struggle of racial stocks, which he accepts as a finality, that he does not escape from naturalism. Evolution in the narrower sense of the struggle for existence is for all these thinkers the basis of their theory of life. Whereas in former times the ethics of privilege intrenched itself in ecclesiastical dogmatism, now it seeks to buttress itself with science, but with a science that, in its turn, is interpreted in a dogmatic way. It is the facts, the plain hard facts of biological evolution, of class division and of race conflict, which are appealed to as the key to the meaning of the universe and hence as being the justification of the ethics of privilege.

On the other hand the world view which supports democratic ethics is spiritualistic. "Wanted: a faith for a task!" cries Rauschenbusch. "A great task," he insists, "demands a great faith. To live a great life a man needs a great cause to which he can surrender, something divinely large and engrossing for which he can live, and, if need be, die. A great religious faith will lift him out of his narrow grooves and make him the inspired instrument of the univer-

sal will of God. It is the point at which the mind of man coincides with the mind of the Eternal." "Our moral efficiency depends on our religious faith. The force of will, of courage, of self-sacrifice liberated by a living religious faith is so incalculable, so invincible, that nothing is impossible when that power enters the field." "Our generation needs a faith, for it is confronting the mightiest task ever undertaken consciously by a generation of men."[1] From essentially the same standpoint James insists upon the need of the moral life for "an infinite Demander" and affirms that "Even if there were no metaphysical or traditional grounds for believing in a God, men would postulate one simply as a pretext for living hard."[2] So likewise Mott's great work for internationalism is bound up with the missionary faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This alliance between faith and democratic ethics cannot be broken down by pointing to the historic movement which has social democracy and internationalism as its creed but which has linked itself up

[1] *Christianizing the Social Order*, pp. 40, 41
[2] *Will to Believe*, p. 211.

with the philosophy of naturalism. For this situation is too plainly the result of reaction against antiquated theology, and against the support given by ecclesiasticism to the ethics of privilege, to reveal the deeper issues involved; and it is a situation that, before the war, had shown marked signs of giving way.[1] Such a situation indeed constitutes a challenge to the Christian Church which it cannot evade, and which it must prove its power to meet successfully without too long delay. Nevertheless in principle it seems plain that naturalism, with its emphasis upon the struggle for existence as a finality in this universe, is an alien enemy in the ranks of social democracy, masking as a friend but destined sooner or later to betray it to Nietzscheanism and the ethics of privilege.

But Overstreet and the leaders of Ethical Culture, on the other hand, unmistakably stand for the ethics of progress. Such principles as democracy, moral freedom, and internationalism occupy a foremost place in their teachings. What then of their adverse

[1] *Cf. Jesus in the Nineteenth Century and After,* by Weinel and Widgery, chap. IV; and Haw, "Religious Revival in the Labor Movement," *Hibbert Journal,* 1915.

judgment upon the Christian faith in a Father God? In the light of the fundamental issue which we have found running through the thought of our time one must raise the question whether these thinkers have rightly appreciated the vital relation between men's ideals of progress and the world views by which they relate those ideals to experience as a whole. This may be due, in some instances, to the fact that they have been largely preoccupied with another issue—that between ethics and a dogmatic, authoritative theology. Or it may be due in part to the slow emergence of the more fundamental issue, which has only become fully manifest through the Great War. But whatever the cause it is fair to ask whether, in view of the fact that the ethics of privilege has intrenched itself in naturalism, these critics of Christian theism can support the ethics of progress with an adequate world view.

I say an *adequate* world view, for it is by no means true that these writers have overlooked altogether the point in question. While Ethical Culture as an organized movement purposely declines to adopt any views whatever as to the transhuman realm,

as individual thinkers the men we have quoted all feel the need of a conception of the universe in some sense spiritualistic. Doctor Adler, indeed, states his convictions about the universe in such a way that one wonders whether he really rejects the faith in an Eternal Creative Good Will. "Three ideas," he says, "the idea of righteousness, the idea that justice will gain the ascendant, and that there is a sublime purpose in things —three aspects of one idea—these I would not give up. I do not see how any courageous attitude toward life is possible unless one, either avowedly or surreptitiously, retains them."[1] Salter, on the other hand, limits himself to an agnosticism pervaded by a spiritualistic tone of feeling, as we already have seen in his reference to the Supreme Power of the universe as a mystery too solemn for prayer and as "light unapproachable, unthinkable."

But more characteristic of this ethics of progress which rejects theism is the panpsychic view of the universe, and this is the line of Overstreet's speculation. He confronts the prophecy of naturalism that the universe is running down and will end in a

[1] *Religion of Duty*, p. 57.

lifeless, frozen mass, but affirms that "the old dogmatic materialism has had to give way to a critical and open-minded evolutionism."[1] "Even now," he says, "psychology is making groping advances into the region of plant life, with results that increasingly confirm our suspicion that the region of psychical activity extends below the so-called animal plane of life." And then, pointing to the continuity between the organic and inorganic realms, he reaches speculatively the result that the inorganic may prove to be "fundamentally the same in kind as the most advanced forms of life."[2] This, in the form of a hypothesis, is the panpsychic view of the universe. And I have called it the more characteristic position of the trend with which we are dealing because it easily links itself up with the "republic of souls," with which as a distant ideal this trend seeks to replace the monotheistic faith in God and the kingdom of God.

Can the panpsychic view of the universe, projected on toward a republic of souls,

[1] *Forum*, vol. LII, p. 507.

[2] "The Democratic Conception of God," *Hibbert Journal*, vol. XI, pp. 405, 406.

replace the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will as a support for the ethics of progress over against naturalism and the ethics of privilege? It seems to me that the idea that such a substitution can be made successfully, for mankind in general and in the long run, is open to the gravest doubt. Panpsychism, apart from God, lines up behind class struggle, race struggle, war, and imperialism, and supplies them with a philosophy suited to their needs. The struggle between Persian and Greek, Goth and Roman, Saracen and Christian, Mongol and Chinese, the social conflict between propertied classes and the proletariat, the present chaos of civilization through clashing economic forces and military alliances—these are for panpsychism not only facts of existence, as they must be for any philosophy, but ultimate facts, to cope with which there is no intelligence higher than the human. Panpsychism without God reduces the universe to a welter of instincts, on the surface of which human intelligence would seem to be little more than a transient phosphorescent light. Its inherent tendency, therefore, is toward an aristo-

cratic rather than a democratic ethics—that is, toward finding the meaning of the whole in the select breeds and the segregated social cultures which here and there may arise rather than in a redemption for all men and for all human society.

Not so with the faith in an Eternal Creative Good Will. In the midst of all the perplexing maze of facts, evil and good, it finds God himself as one of the facts—a striving God, working through and beyond all human moral strivings toward the elimination of the evil and the establishment of the good. One who has an experience of coworking with such a God does not throw a robe of charity over the evil facts and call them good, after the fashion of the absolutist philosopher or theologian. Nor does he seek an emotional rhapsody in which the distinctions between evil and good dissolve, after the manner of the mystic. But he does know the stern joy of sharing in the making of a moral world with a God who has brought man upon the stage of existence in the midst of his own creative processes. The work, the struggle, the sacrifice, the insights, the defeats and the victories are his and God's together. He is quite willing

to interpret the kingdom of God as a commonwealth of God, so much does the idea of coworking with God and man in a great moral enterprise mean to him; but the God from whom he draws his strength he believes to be great enough to be working in the distant stars as well, and to have been working when the first instinctive life began to move upon this planet.

Such an experience gives the strongest support to the ethics of progress. The consciousness of sonship to God which it involves gives a far bolder ideal in its forward reach than that of the superman, and at the same time it is a dynamic source of democracy because it recognizes the infinite value of every human soul. Such an experience too sustains and nourishes moral freedom, because it recognizes every creative impulse within itself as a pulse-beat in the Infinite Creative Life. And out of such an experience arises likewise the ethics of internationalism. For from the beginning the Christian consciousness of sonship has worked toward the breaking down of every "middle wall of partition" between race and race, and has set forth the ideal of the organic unity of mankind in

Christ. Through its support of the ethics of democracy, of moral freedom, and of internationalism we may justly maintain that the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will has inexhaustible meaning and value for social progress.

II

But it is time for us to relate what we have been saying to the topic of the objective validity of the experience of God. In the first lecture we found that the experience of moral creativity is in a peculiar degree capable of arousing the reality sense and thus furnishes a hopeful clew to the meaning of the universe. In the consciousness of coworking with a morally creative God this experience gains an important verification through its power to promote the development of personality and to propagate that development to others. Thus what is at first, from the standpoint of philosophy, a working hypothesis becomes elevated to a reasonable theory. And this takes place by the only process by which a philosophy of life can

hope to establish itself—by the process of organizing experience.

But the verification of the faith in an Eternal Creative Good Will which comes through the development of personality is necessarily only partial and points on to social experience as the realm where it can be made more nearly complete. Our next step, therefore, is to consider the objective validity of this faith in the light of social progress.

It must be pointed out at once, however, that our argument for the objective validity of a morally creative God has been implicitly given already in setting forth the meaning and value of the experience of him. For any thorough-going organization of experience will have to include values as well as facts. And consequently, in showing the high social value of the consciousness of coworking with God, we have established a reasonable presumption of the reality of God and have furnished for that presumption important positive proof. In other words, the ideal of social progress postulates an Eternal Creative Good Will, and the fact of social progress affords to that postulate the most significant verification.

Yet there are important aspects of this argument from social progress which must be explicitly brought out, if we are to appreciate it rightly. In the first place, the postulate of God which is contained in the ideal of social progress might be thought of as resting upon an *a priori* authority of the moral consciousness, conceived after the manner of Kant; and if so, the rejoinder immediately is suggested that a moral consciousness possessing that kind of authority is sufficient to itself, and is only weakened by the claim that a God must be postulated in its support. It is, indeed, some such idea of the absolute self-sufficiency of the ethical consciousness that appears to lie behind the tendency of Ethical Culture and similar movements to swing loose from religion. It is remarkable how long the appeal to authority can maintain itself over against empiricism by means of strategic retreats. From the infallibility of the church, or of dogma, or of the Bible, or of the words or the person of Christ, it may retreat by way of philosophy into the moral consciousness and may imagine that there it has something that is infallible. But men are more and more coming to realize

that the moral consciousness, like every other spiritual possession, is a product of evolution and education; and if so, that we must look for the forces which will sustain it and secure its further development. The moral consciousness is not sufficient to itself, as Kant supposed, for the reason that it is a thing of growth, which, like all results of the growing process, may degenerate, but which ought to keep on growing. And just because of this lack of self-sufficiency it postulates whatever is most favorable for its maintenance, vitality, and ceaseless growth.

Thus the ideal of social progress postulates the Eternal Creative Good Will, not as the statue postulates the pedestal—simply in order that the qualities which unchangeably belong to it may appear in their full dignity—but as the fertile soil postulates the sun. Just as the fertile soil has stored up energies from the sun through millenniums of cosmic evolution, so the ideal of social progress is the product of countless generations of moral evolution, during which the human conscience has stored up energies from the experience of God. And again, just as the fertility of the soil cannot

be long maintained, still less increased, without being acted upon by the immediate light and warmth of the sun, so the ideal of social progress can hardly have permanent and increasing fruitfulness unless it is cultivated through being opened up to a present experience of the Eternal Creative Good Will. Not that individual men cannot promote social progress without a conscious experience of God—perhaps more effectively than some other men who possess such an experience. But, even so, such individuals draw upon the accumulated social effects of man's experience of God, and they could accomplish little objective social good without the co-operation of great masses of men in whom the experience of God is working as a positive social force. Certainly if the Eternal Creative Good Will be a reality, he can work through socially minded men who are unable to believe in him. But the more we realize that the social mind is a hard-won evolutionary and educational product, which at the same time stands in great need of development and expansion among men, the more rational it becomes to postulate the validity of those ideas and experiences which have

proven of the highest value in producing the social mind. And that the experience of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will is of the utmost significance for sustaining social progress and promoting democratic ethics we already have shown.

But, again, the idea of social progress postulates a world favorable to its realization, and hence postulates as the dominant principle of the world an Eternal Creative Good Will. That is to say, social progress is not a purely mental matter, as though it could be worked out in sermons and university lectures and would be an accomplished fact when these secured the assent of men. On the contrary, it is to a very important degree a physical matter, involving the scientific control of nature for production, the securing of individual and community health, the imparting of forms of beauty to physical things, especially to useful things and to the physical setting of community life, the devising of apparatus for research, and the keeping of ethical and spiritual development in close relation to these other tasks. Now if the physical universe is inherently and on the whole as indifferent or hostile to the social enterprise

as it appears to be, let us say, within the arctic and antarctic circles, then social progress is a circumscribed and broken ideal. Men may resist the encroachments of the physical universe as Eskimos raise meagre crops at the margins of glaciers or build camp-fires to hold back the relentless cold. But the odds are overwhelmingly against them, and they are foredoomed to a slow but sure extinction. But if, on the contrary, the dominant principle in the world is a Creative Intelligence, working out the realization of good and steadily devising new good, then the programme of social progress is full of hope. It is not predestined to succeed, even so, for there can be no truly social progress except as man has an intelligent will toward progress. But the reality on which man is conditioned is on the side of his highest ideals and reinforces at every point his efforts for their realization. Hence when the idea of social progress is taken in its most comprehensive and practical meaning, including both an upbuilding of the social order and a transformation of the physical order, it is seen to postulate an Eternal Creative Good Will as the controlling principle in the universe.

This aspect of the postulate of God which is contained in the ideal of social progress is closer to the thought of Kant than was the preceding aspect, yet even here there is an important difference that should be noted. Kant says that, as beings who are bound to obey the moral law in this world, we must postulate as Cause of the world a Power that is working out moral ends. But according to Kant we never get beyond the mere postulate, so as to arrive at a real experience of this Power. It is as though a traveller in a foreign land felt bound to assume that his government would protect him wherever he went but never could have any concrete evidence of the fact, nor any real communication with his government. But, according to the interpretation that we have reached, in which social progress is thought of as the joint achievement of man and God, the postulating of God should prove to be a means of entering into a genuine experience of him. The situation is like that of the free citizen who postulates a democratic government in relation to which he may realize his freedom. The realization of his own freedom and the functioning of his government come to be

in constant interaction. So, when one postulates God as the underlying force in social progress, he thereby anticipates that the co-operative action of God will become a matter of living experience to him. And thus we reach the concluding thought of the present discussion, namely, in the fact of social progress the postulate of God has substantial verification.

At the present tragic hour in the world's history such an argument may seem at first sight to excuse us for faltering in our religious convictions instead of aiding us to stand firm. When society is going prosperously forward there would appear to be no better evidence of the reality of God than just this fact. But when society has been overwhelmed by a cataclysmic war we naturally grasp for evidence of God outside of human evolution as a means of steadying our faith. But in such vital questions it is not well to surrender to panic; it is better to yield a little ground than to suffer our lines to be broken. The present crisis calls, not for an abandonment of the appeal to actual verification, but for a re-examination of the conditions upon which the securing of that verification de-

pends. When during the construction of the great Quebec bridge across the St. Lawrence it twice occurred that a long section buckled and fell into the river, the engineers did not abandon the ruin, but revised their calculations, and now the bridge stands complete and traffic is moving across it in security. When the Culebra cut was repeatedly filled by huge landslips, the Panama Canal was not given up as a failure by its engineers; instead, new means for removing the obstacles and keeping open the great waterway were invented. So the verification of the faith in an Eternal Creative Good Will which actual social progress affords is not now to be abandoned; but rather we are to examine more carefully into the conditions of securing that verification.

One condition of securing the verification of the postulate of God through actual social progress has often been overlooked, but now is becoming increasingly evident. It is this: the evidence for God which may be secured through his living manifestation in social progress is conditioned upon the exercise of faith and of creative intelligence by man on a democratic scale. Each item

in this statement deserves a few words of emphasis.

Faith, actively exercised by man, conditions the manifestation of God in social progress. For, if God aims to make man a coworker with him, man must gain some vision of the joint task and must experience some reaching out for God's co-operation and some setting of the will toward the great enterprise. An outreach for divine fellowship in toiling for an unrealized vision of the good—that is faith, and that is an attitude on man's part which gives the Eternal Creative Good Will a new opportunity. And let it not be objected that faith cannot precede evidence, for evidence must precede faith. It is not a question here of precedence but of organic interaction. Bodily exercise is conditioned upon food, but food can neither be gathered nor assimilated without bodily exercise. If there has been no manifestation of God in the world at all, doubtless we shall be unable to make the venture of faith, but the venture of faith is none the less necessary for new manifestations of God.

Creative intelligence in man also conditions the manifestation of God in social

progress. Professor Dewey says that "we live forward," but that our philosophies have been chiefly occupied with looking backward; hence human development has lacked the guidance it should have had and has suffered partial arrest. Now, if God is creating creators, any failure of men to apply their utmost inventive thinking to social problems inevitably holds back his creative work. The race may, indeed, make some progress—slowly, painfully, and with much kicking against the goads—through being driven forward by God as the drover urges on his herd of cattle. But what God seeks to do is not to drive but to lead, and this requires men who are alert to follow God in the expression of his Creative Moral Intelligence. Inventiveness in the physical realm has had a wonderful development in recent decades, and has opened to us a new experience of God's reality and purpose. And this suggests to us what inventiveness in the moral and social realm may accomplish, and what may thereby be gained in the way of new evidence of God.

But both faith and creative intelligence must now be exercised on a democratic

scale, if we are to have that new evidence of God which awakens fresh conviction. Authority in religion, autocracy in politics and industry, academicism in philosophy and art set limits to God's work of creating creators and so hold back social progress. So far as these principles hold sway great masses of men are deprived of the living evidence of God which comes through personal discovery and are offered only that which is second-hand. But the true "Christian evidences" are never merely second-hand. They are of the kind that are realized in personal experience of sonship to God and brotherhood among men, and they require the evoking of active faith and of creative intelligence in every man. Here again we must point out the organic and reciprocal relation between the proof and the thing proven. If the ethics of democracy, of moral freedom, and of internationalism is nourished by the consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will, this consciousness in turn expands and gets corroborated in proportion as the ethics of democracy, of moral freedom, and of internationalism is taken as our guide. In proportion as the ethics of privilege gives

way to the ethics of progress man's faith in God will gain in rational strength.

But there is plenty of foothold for faith in the social progress of the past. The backward look gives us much evidence of God. It shows us prophetism, by its faith in God, maintaining loyalty to righteousness through the break-up of a nation and holding together in the midst of the clash of empires a community possessing the purest worship and morals that the world then knew. It shows us Jesus striking out a new type of faith and morals, universal in its scope, and capable of so uniting itself with the best in Greco-Roman culture as to survive the disintegration of the ancient order and to furnish the basis for what may yet prove to be a world civilization. It shows us the Reformers winning for the Western world that liberty of conscience necessary for the new developments of science and of political life. It shows us the Puritan and the Wesleyan movements rescuing faith and moral seriousness from a smothering worldliness and establishing them among the common people. It shows us a missionary movement that has attacked the world's superstition and social

stagnation in an ever-broadening campaign and has laid the foundations for internationalism. It shows us a new social consciousness, challenging intrenched privilege, championing the rights of labor, of the propertyless classes, and of women, and bent upon securing the widest possible sharing of the fruits of production and of culture. And these are but the more outstanding and consciously religious features of social progress, which need to have the many achievements of science and politics and art interwoven with them in order to make a true picture of what God has wrought in human society.

But the forward look opens to us great possibilities of new evidence of God. Our vision to-day is not the apocalyptic vision of the premillennarian, nor the transcendental vision of the mystic. It is the soberer and yet more warm-hearted social vision. It is the vision of the sons of God working together with their Eternal Father, by science and creative moral intelligence, for the building of a better world. It presents us a race of men with a new consciousness of brotherhood, co-operating to abolish war and translate brotherhood from a

name into a fact through constructing a Federal World Republic. It depicts for us woman free to attain her full development and to take her full part in the social order. It promises us a solution of the industrial question, not through the efforts of capital to consolidate its positions and extend its intrenchments along the whole industrial frontier, nor through labor's efforts simply to expropriate capital, but through the development of industrial democracy. It portrays for us a church which gives due scope to the manifoldness of religious experience and which thereby is able to concentrate its moral forces upon the real moral issues, to guide moral education, and to make its worship the great source for a growing social consciousness among men.

After all, the great proof of God is the ever-coming Kingdom of God. And this evidence is most fully open to those who interpret the moral achievements of the past in the light of thoughtful social vision for the future, who are striving to realize to the full their possibilities for moral creativity, and who are seeking to evoke and to co-operate with a like creativity in other men.

But social progress must take place in the midst of the general processes of cosmic evolution; and while we already have had occasion to describe the postulate which the social ideal makes with reference to the cosmos as a whole, the validity and meaning of this postulate require interpretation in the light of the general nature of the evolutionary process. This interpretation will be the task of the next lecture.

III

THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD AND COSMIC EVOLUTION

To bring these two ideas into relation at the present juncture in human affairs may seem to be a venturesome task. For cosmic evolution has become again a matter of painful ambiguity in its bearing upon the religious consciousness. The situation is, indeed, not the same as it was fifty years ago, when the idea of evolution first gained scientific authority through Darwin's *Origin of Species* and wrought such havoc in the realm of religious faith. For then the question was not primarily whether there was enough good in the world to justify the idea of God, but rather it was the question whether the good that was here had not come about in entirely natural ways, thus making the idea of a supernatural source for the good unnecessary. Natural selection was felt to be entirely hostile to the ideas of creation and providence; evolution

seemed to leave no room for theism. And so for many, as for Romanes, the universe "lost its soul of loveliness" and faith became no longer tenable; while most of those who retained their faith felt that the idea of evolution was something to be bitterly opposed.

But for our intellectual leadership, and to a large extent also for intelligent popular thought, this situation has practically disappeared. In fact, evolution has been increasingly looked upon as furnishing the strongest kind of support for faith. Evolution, we have been wont to say, is simply God's method of revelation. The uniformity of nature, religious teachers have often affirmed, is but the steadfastness of the divine character, and physical laws are the habits of God. And while Christian theists have long since ceased to draw an argument from design from the human eye or ear or hand, they frequently have claimed that a much more adequate and conclusive argument from design was to be obtained from evolution as a whole. The view that evolution emphatically supports faith is well illustrated by Drummond's *Ascent of Man.* In the closing chapter he says: "Up to this

time no word has been spoken to reconcile Christianity with evolution, or evolution with Christianity. And why? Because the two are one. What is evolution? A method of creation. What is its object? To make more perfect living beings. What is Christianity? A method of creation. What is its object? To make more perfect living beings. Through what does evolution work? Through love. Through what does Christianity work? Through love. Evolution and Christianity have the same Author, the same end, the same spirit."[1] So John Fiske, in his *Through Nature to God*, argues that evolution establishes "the everlasting reality of religion," and representative Christian ministers, like Lyman Abbott or Newman Smythe, find in evolution the basis for their theism.

But the Great War has brought about a new tension between the idea of evolution and faith in God. This new tension springs not from the irreconcilability between evolutionary law and supernatural creation but from the clash between the actual facts of evolution and the idea that the cosmos is realizing a moral purpose. How can evolu-

[1] P. 342.

tion be in any sense the work of God when it results in anything so palpably irrational and so colossally hideous as this war? We do not call it moral progress when the building up of a great fortune ends in wholesale waste and debauchery on the part of its possessors. In what sense can moral progress be claimed for a civilization which can issue in such a débâcle as is now taking place, in which the human race is slaughtering or deforming its toilers by the million, squandering the fruits of a century's toil, and dooming untold numbers of its little ones to a burdened and enfeebled existence? Can these things take place in a world in which a God is in control? Such are some of the questions about the relation of cosmic evolution to religious faith which are irresistibly raised by the present world calamity.

Now this situation is being met in two different ways that have an important bearing on the conclusions to which we came in our preceding discussion; for they lead, in the one instance to a complete, and in the other to a partial, abandonment of the postulate of God, which we found to be bound up with the ideal of social progress.

The first way is that of those who say that the war, like everything else, is a product of blind cosmic forces. It was made absolutely necessary, they hold, by the conformation of the planet on which we live, by the "pressure of race protoplasm," and by the struggle for existence between antagonistic cultures. Its issues are not those of right and wrong but those of an inevitable conflict between rights. One brilliant American exponent of this interpretation of the war sums up considerations like these by taking Phillips Brooks's phrase, "Nothing that ought not to be need be," and transmuting it into "Nothing that ought not to be can be."[1] In other words, whatever happens should be accepted as what ought to happen, because nothing else was possible. Now this view entirely excludes the faith in an Eternal Creative Good Will, and for that reason, as we note, it reverts to the aristocratic, deterministic, nationalistic type of ethics. Thus we get indirect testimony to our conclusion that the ethics of democracy, moral freedom, and internationalism really does postulate an Eternal Creative Good Will.

[1] H. H. Powers, *The Things Men Fight for*, p. 364.

But what is of importance for us now is that this view challenges us to consider directly the nature of cosmic evolution, in order to see whether it admits of any real postulate of God.

The other way of meeting our present spiritual situation is that of Mr. H. G. Wells, who brings forward the doctrine of a finite God. Mr. Wells fully identifies himself with the ethics of progress as over against the ethics of privilege, and he does not desire to leave that ethics with the fragile support of a vague tendency in things or a panpsychism without a God, as the Ethical Culture thinkers have done. Hence he affirms a definite God who is more than the sum of humanity, but finite. But as for the postulate of God as the immanent controlling force in cosmic evolution, he holds that to be not only unjustifiable in the light of the facts, but also unnecessary and undesirable.

These two ways of reacting upon our present intellectual and moral perplexity furnish the questions for our concluding discussion. Is the experience of God as an Eternal Creative Good Will corroborated or discredited by cosmic evolution? And

does the idea of God as the immanent controlling force in cosmic evolution enhance or impair the vital value of the experience of God for modern life?

I

The question whether the experience of God is corroborated or discredited by cosmic evolution is the question whether or not cosmic evolution gives evidence of being the manifestation of a comprehensive purpose. Does cosmic evolution, we must proceed to ask, eliminate the idea of a comprehensive purpose in the universe, or is it more adequately interpreted by means of that idea?

Now if one begins with the more elementary cosmic problems and reviews the stages of the evolutionary process up to the problems that are most intricate, with the expectation that at one or more points nothing but the idea of a divine purpose will serve as an explanation, one is destined to be disappointed in his expectations. In astronomy La Place found the hypothesis of a God unnecessary when he had worked out the application of the laws of mechanical evolution. In biology Dar-

win eliminated the appeal to a Great Designer when he established the principle of natural selection. In physiology Huxley, on the basis of evolution, came to regard even human consciousness as an epiphenomenon. In ethics Clifford, by evolutionary reasoning, substituted for the doctrine that conscience is the voice of God the explanation that it springs from the tribal conscience of primitive man. And in politics our political scientists explain the state, not from the divine right of kings, but from sovereignties established and maintained by military force.

And in general one must admit that the substitution of an evolutionary explanation for the direct appeal to a divine purpose is valid; for the appeal to a divine purpose as a scientific explanation means a breach in the continuity of nature, whereas it is only through the discovery of continuity that we can effect the accurate adjustment to our environment and control over its events which is the object of science.

But suppose that we begin with our present universe, which we can concretely know, instead of with a past universe which we can only abstractly know, and suppose

that we seek to trace the continuity of the universe backward instead of forward. We shall then find that the purposive principle is indispensable for an adequate understanding of our universe, and that the working of this principle can be traced, if not throughout the cosmic process, at least very far back in its course.

First of all, we see at work in our present universe, as a significant factor in its evolution, a co-operative social intelligence. This is of course obscured by the present war, but the tragedy of the war centres precisely in the fact that it to so large a degree suspends the co-operative social thinking which was becoming more and more a force in human affairs. There is, for example, co-operative social thinking in the ranks of labor—thinking in terms of trades, of organized industries, of internationalism. If the latter phase of this thinking broke down with the war, that is no more than must be admitted, so far as practical control is concerned, of every other force for internationalism; and this internationalism of labor remains as an important basis for reconstruction, since the democracy for which we are fighting is destined to be an

industrial democracy. There is co-operative social thinking, too, in the ranks of capital, for the most intelligent capitalism thinks, not simple in terms of money, but in terms of populations and their needs. The advance of political democracy around the globe is another evidence of co-operative social intelligence. Science is to a large degree a conscious application of the same principle. The Christian religion, with its ideal of the Kingdom of God on earth and its application of this ideal in morals, in philanthropy, and in missions, furnishes—in spite of all divisive tendencies—the most significant example of all.

Now this co-operative social intelligence is actually transforming this planet, and so is a positive force in the physical evolution of the cosmos. It has given the earth a nervous system through the telegraph, the telephone, the ocean cable, the wireless apparatus. It has given the earth a muscular system by means of the machinery of manufacturing, and a circulatory system by means of the machinery of transportation. It has increased the fertility of the earth by irrigation, drainage, conservation of resources, and scientific sanitation. And

it is even finding out how to increase the beauty of the earth by adding to the charm of wildness the charm of ordered grace. The whole earth may almost be said to be in process of becoming literally alive through the work of co-operative social intelligence.

But more important than this: it is upon co-operative social intelligence that all future social evolution now turns. Mankind apparently has gotten about as far as it can by mere unconscious social evolution. We now see that the Superman cannot arise without the Super-race, and that the geniuses that are to contribute most to the progress of the world will be those who have a genius for democracy. The old principle of individual intelligence working unaided, or apparently so, must give way to the principle of co-operative social intelligence, if evolution is to continue to unfold new and higher modes of existence.

But the next step in tracing backward the continuity of purposiveness in the universe is to note that this co-operative social intelligence which is now in process of formation is conditioned upon a long evolution of mind—and by mind I mean, not any psychic

activity whatever, but conscious thinking and purposeful action. One great factor in evolution, no doubt, is mere unconscious pressure, like the movement of a glacier down a mountain under the weight of the constantly accumulating snow and ice above. But a still more vital factor is the thinking and the purposeful action which are illustrated by the building of the funicular railway to the mountain-top. Conscious wants, the effort to surmount difficulties, and the invention of means for so doing—these are factors without which evolution as we know it could not have proceeded, and without which of course no co-operative social intelligence would ever have been possible. The long but dramatic story of the transition from the first movement of savage curiosity, the first tool, the first articulate word, the first picture writing, the first feeling of the tribal conscience, to the laboratory, the airplane, the address that sways a nation, the great charters of democracy, and the conscientious thinking for humanity—this story is now worked out in its main features, and it establishes mind as an element of prime importance in the process of evolution.

But we must take another step in tracing back the continuity of purposiveness in the universe. In the age-long evolution through which natural selection has led up to mind the most significant element has been psychic selection. By psychic selection I mean the reaction upon environment which is made possible by sensation and instinct, and which works long before anything like intelligent selection comes in. We say that natural selection explains the development of the eye, but we should not forget that the eye—from the first pigment spot sensitive to light to the eye of man—is a selective organ that in turn explains natural selection, and that its efficacy is due to psychic activity. And so with every other aspect of organic development. A vital element everywhere is the awareness of environment which appears in sensation and the useful reaction which depends upon instinct. How far back this psychic selection can be traced is of course undetermined, but the psychic activity of microorganisms is one of the most significant lines of present biological inquiry. What concerns us here, however, is that so far back as this psychic selection can be traced there

is no breach in the continuity of purposiveness in the universe.

But here we shall almost certainly be met by an objection. Is not reasoning like this, it will be protested, destined to be nullified by the opposite tendency of biological science to extend the mechanical explanation of phenomena into every field of its inquiry? Suppose that a chemical origin of life can be found, and the chemical explanation of physiological functions continues to make progress, will not then the principle of purposiveness be undermined and the mechanical theory of evolution be sure of triumph?

For answer I must borrow an argument from L. T. Hobhouse's important work on *Development and Purpose*. Professor Hobhouse argues that, so far from the teleological explanation being superseded by the mechanical, the mechanical explanation, as it is elaborated, tends to pass over into the teleological. Let me adapt freely one of his illustrations to bring out his thought. A machine is characterized by the mutual indifference of its parts, and gets its unity and coherence only from some principle outside itself. Hence if one part breaks

down the rest go pounding on till they too are broken and the whole comes to a stop. Not so with an organism. When one part is injured the other parts instantly begin to co-operate for its repair. Or, if a part is subjected to special strain, it is soon thickened up by aid of the rest of the organism so that it can stand the strain. So likewise an organism provides by nutrition against its own wear and tear and by reproduction even against its own death. In short, an organism is a sympathetic whole the parts of which instantaneously co-operate for its own maintenance and development.

But suppose we expand the mechanical explanation to cover the case of the organism, as we may legitimately try to do. We may add a governor to our machine, as in the case of the engine, or compensating devices against fluctuations in temperature, as in the chronometer. Let us imagine that we could continue adding such compensating and regulating devices until the machine could secure its own maintenance and growth. Have we then displaced teleology by mechanism? On the contrary, says Hobhouse, we have passed through mechan-

ism to teleology. Our machine has become an organism. For, instead of being characterized by the mutual indifference of its parts, which is of the essence of the machine, it is characterized by instantaneous sympathetic co-operation of its parts for the maintenance of the whole, which is of the essence of the organism. The teleology which we see in an organism is, of course, not the teleology of an external designer. It is an immanent teleology, in which an organism secures its own maintenance and growth—not necessarily through any prevision of these ends, but simply through an awareness of its own inherent causal tendency. But what is a purpose even in human experience? It is never a complete prevision of results. "The purposive state of our experience," says Hobhouse, "is a process moving under the control of the idea of its own causal tendency."[1] Thus a completely self-regulating machine is nothing more or less than an organism, and explanation by mechanism passes over into explanation by purpose. Let chemical and mechanical explanations of life and its functions be extended to the limit, they still cannot eliminate the reality

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 319.

of that purposiveness in the universe, the continuity of which we have been tracing.

But now, having traced purposiveness in the universe from co-operative social intelligence in humanity back to the rudimentary psychic selection in the simplest organisms, what shall we say of the process as a whole? And what shall we say of the inorganic world, where no psychic functions are experimentally discoverable? The answer of Hobhouse to this general problem will help us to define our own answer.

Hobhouse argues that reality as a whole so far possesses an organic character as to lead us to postulate a Central Mind. "If," he says, "a purpose runs through the world-whole, there is a Mind of which the world purpose is the object. Such a Mind must be a permanent and central factor in the process of Reality, but how in detail its relation to reality in general, and the individual mind in particular, is to be conceived is a question about which it is best frankly to confess ignorance."[1] But notwithstanding our need of confessing ignorance Hobhouse claims—I quote his words—"not in the least as a matter of faith, but

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 365.

as a sound working hypothesis, that the evolutionary process can best be understood as the effect of a purpose slowly working itself out under limiting conditions which it brings successively under control."[1]

But we must heed especially Hobhouse's view of these "limiting conditions" under which he conceives the Central Mind to be working. They consist of whatever has not as yet been organized into the harmonious expression of purpose, and they may be subdivided into two classes: on the one hand, the partial purposive processes which clash with each other, and on the other hand, processes of mere blind mechanism —which is "the antithesis of purpose." Out of these limiting conditions Hobhouse gets his explanation of evil: physical evil being "the outcome of the blind operation of mechanical forces," and moral evil being "the result of the pursuit of partial ends without regard to the effect on others."[2] And so Hobhouse holds that the Central Mind "must neither be confused with the whole of things nor with an Omnipotent Creator of things,"[3] but must be regarded as developing in the midst of reality.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. xxvi. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 368. [3] *Op. cit.*, p. 367.

Thus we see that the Central Mind, as Hobhouse conceives it, is a finite God, and so is formally akin to the doctrine of H. G. Wells, which we are to take up as the last topic of our discussion. Nevertheless, Hobhouse's idea is founded on such different reasoning and is so much wider in its scope that it requires separate consideration, and by considering it on its own merits we shall be aided to the next step in our thought.

The reasonableness of the idea of a Central Mind we already had given evidence for in tracing the continuity of purposiveness in the universe from co-operative social intelligence back to primitive psychic selection. And while the evidence does not constitute an independent philosophical basis for faith—a basis worked out independently of religious experience after the manner of natural theology—it does furnish an important corroboration for faith. Certainly if we can go so far as to say that the reality of a Central Mind is a sound working hypothesis for the interpretation of evolution, that gives support to the religious experience of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will. But further, in view of the reality and magnitude of evil in the

world, especially as revealed so appallingly in this war, it seems inevitable that we should recognize the Central Mind to be working under limiting conditions. But the important question remains: are these limiting conditions such as are inherent in the nature of the world purpose, or are they in part entirely external to that purpose? Certain limitations—and very momentous ones—are inherent in a world purpose that is moral and social and that is to be realized by an evolutionary process. Such conditions are meant by Hobhouse when he speaks of partial purposive processes not yet organized into harmony. But when he speaks of limiting conditions due to blind mechanism operating in an entirely unorganized way, of course these must be thought of as wholly external to the world purpose. Now I believe it can be shown that this latter interpretation of the limiting conditions which exist for the Central Mind is philosophically unnecessary, and that, if it be retained, it makes the idea of a Central Mind religiously insufficient. While if we can recognize the limiting conditions as all being inherent in the world purpose, the idea of a Central

Mind unqualifiedly serves our religious needs. For we can then think of the entire process of cosmic evolution as being controlled by an Eternal Creative Good Will.

In considering this question of whether there are in the world mechanical processes wholly external to any purpose we cannot afford to ignore Bergson's doctrine of Creative Evolution. Bergson regards mechanism, not with Hobhouse as a realm of reality originally unrelated to evolutionary forces, nor with the naturalistic philosopher as the real nature of evolution, but simply as an aspect of the evolutionary process, which in its deeper nature is a Creative Life. For example, one who simply looks at a motion picture of a runner gets merely the mechanical equivalent of the reality by means of a swift succession of static photographs; but the runner himself, doing his hundred-yards dash, experiences the creative energies of reality in its fulness. So one who examines an inventor's blueprints perceives only a static and mechanical aspect of the real inventive process; whereas the inventor himself, experimenting, rejecting, devising, is in the real stream

of creative evolution. Or once more, the musical score is only a mechanical representation of a symphony; but the composer, as he originates the symphony, or the orchestra as it renders it, embodies the vital creative impulses to which all evolution is due.

Thus, according to Bergson's view, mechanism is incapable of representing any portion of reality in its fulness. For certain practical purposes, indeed, we rightly make great use of the principle of mechanism. It helps us to grasp facts in the mass, to deal with them swiftly, to effect new groupings and combinations—just as a commander-in-chief handles his army as one mass, makes it mobile, reorganizes it, by mathematics. But as the commander-in-chief cannot safely forget that his army is after all made up of striving and suffering human beings, so we cannot wisely regard any portion of reality as mere mechanism. On the contrary, from Bergson's standpoint all reality is included in one eternal process of creative evolution, of which God is the inexhaustible source. "God," says Bergson, "is incessant life, action, liberty"; and he is the centre from which the re-

ality of the universe is continually leaping forth.[1]

Now these features of Bergson's conception of evolution aid us in interpreting the limiting conditions under which, in view of the reality of evil, we must think of God as working. For on the basis of Bergson's doctrine there are no limiting conditions outside of the creative process, and yet within the creative process there are limiting conditions of a very real nature. Such conditions are—if we may introduce a classification of our own here—first, new finite creative processes, relatively separate and not yet harmonized; second, the results of past creative activities, which must be more fully organized; third, processes of disintegration needing to be neutralized. Each of these kinds of limitation may be illustrated, for the sake of clearness, from the human realm.

The new and unharmonized creative processes have a palpable illustration in the rival modern cultures—Anglo-Saxon, Teuton, Latin, Slavic—each having certain merits and yet each endangered for lack of integration with the others. And we

[1] *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 270.

must admit that such rivalry of cultures is hardly preventable where co-operative social intelligence is only midway in the course of its development. The results of past creative activities needing fuller organization are illustrated wherever within a given group the problem of social education is an urgent one, as it is in the case of the conflicts of capital and labor. And the disintegrations needing to be neutralized are apparent wherever older forms of social control—those of the tribe or of the backward civilization—are breaking down before modern civilization, and the social order is in danger of becoming poisoned through slavery, political or industrial, or through new forms of vice.

Now these examples, though taken from the human realm, illustrate processes that are traceable all the way back along the course of creative evolution to the most rudimentary beginnings. The rivalry of cultures, taken lower down in the scale, is the mere struggle for existence between groups and types. Nor does a point like this mean the recognition of the blind struggle for existence as omnipotent, for in a process of creative evolution new and

higher forces are to be recognized as appearing along the way. We are interpreting the lower stages of evolution by the higher, instead of the higher by the lower, but a continuity between all the stages must also be recognized. In like manner the need for fuller organization, in order that a type or group may assimilate its past gains, is apparent all through evolution wherever the principle of correlation comes in—as for instance in the correlation between the use of weapons and tools by primitive man and his acquiring an erect posture. So, too, the need of neutralizing processes of disintegration appears wherever parasitic forms of life develop.

Now the features of the evolutionary process which we have just been tracing constitute limitations upon the realization of the world purpose, and yet they are necessary conditions on which the realization of that purpose depends. They are inherent in the creative evolutionary process itself, and so are germane to the world purpose which gives the whole process its meaning. Thus the dualism of Hobhouse's view—due to his regarding mechanism as originally a realm external to the working

of the Central Mind—is avoided, and yet a no less genuine explanation of the occurrence of evil in the evolutionary process is gained.

But while we have turned to Bergson for the point of view which best enables us to understand the limiting conditions involved in God's creative work, there is a central characteristic of his doctrine which challenges criticism on the basis of the interpretation we are working out. Bergson, while eliminating the dualism just referred to, admits into his thinking a dualism of another kind, which is liable to serious consequences. This is the dualism between intelligence and intuition. Intelligence, in Bergson's doctrine, is backward-looking; it analyzes facts for practical purposes and then organizes them into mechanical schemes. It is intuition that is forward-looking and that makes us aware of the pulsing reality of evolution. Now while Bergson holds that both the view of reality given by intelligence and that given by intuition must be taken into account in making up a total philosophy, yet he does not combine intuition and intelligence into a unified function of the human mind. But

just such a combination is needed for the understanding of evolution. It is *creative intelligence* to which evolution leads up, and it is upon a further achievement of creative intelligence that any further forward movement of evolution depends. And it is the absence of a clearly unified conception of creative intelligence, in man and in the life of the universe, that leads Leuba and others to regard Bergson's conception of God as that of a non-purposive Creative Force. What Bergson's system may grow into we do not know, but it certainly seems to be severely handicapped by the dualism which he has left between intuition and intelligence.

How now shall we summarize our thought under this first topic? To what extent have we found cosmic evolution corroborating the religious consciousness of coworking with an Eternal Creative Good Will?

We have traced the evidence for a world purpose from the co-operative social intelligence at work in human society, back through the evolution of mind, back through psychic selection in its more rudimentary forms, to the inorganic world. And we have found the hypothesis that the in-

organic world, so-called, is really the manifestation of an inexhaustible Creative Life to be preferable philosophically to the hypothesis that it is a realm of mechanism originally external to the Central Life or Mind. To such an interpretation of the cosmos we may give the name of evolutionary theism. Now the prime significance of evolutionary theism lies in the synthesis which it makes between the idea of a world purpose and the need of recognizing limiting conditions. This synthesis consists in the recognition of limiting conditions which really retard, or temporarily defeat the world purpose, and which nevertheless are inherent in the nature of that purpose and necessary for its realization. How important this synthesis is we already have seen from the consequences which follow from its absence. In the preceding lecture we saw that panpsychism without a God tended to support an aristocratic, deterministic, nationalistic ethics instead of the ethics of democracy, moral freedom, and internationalism, and in the present discussion we have seen that the doctrine of a Central Mind in evolution, if combined with the view that there is a realm of pure

mechanism, results in an unsatisfactory dualism. But evolutionary theism makes it possible for us to avoid both these errors, because it helps us to conceive of a democratic world purpose which is being progressively reached by a continuous process of cosmic evolution through limiting conditions which are bound up with the very nature of that purpose.

An illustration of the way in which, in evolutionary theism, the world purpose and the limiting conditions are interrelated may serve to bring out the conclusion at which we have arrived. Let us suppose a modern educator who combined the largest ideals of democratic education with the highest administrative efficiency to be placed in charge of the educational system of the teeming millions in China and to be given unlimited political power and financial resources. His purpose would include responsible participation in the national life on the part of every Chinese from the lowest coolie to the highest mandarin. But his purpose could be accomplished only by a long process of evolution, and notwithstanding the full political powers given him and his unlimited financial resources, he would be subject to

many limiting conditions, due to the fact that the Chinese themselves were at so many different stages of development, and that each stage was necessarily connected with every other stage. Many hindrances and positive evils would result from these limiting conditions, and yet they are not conditions foreign to the purpose of the educator but are inherent in its very nature.

So on the basis of evolutionary theism the Central Mind is conditioned at each point in evolution by the stages that have gone before and that coexist, and by the increasing spontaneity of individual centres of life; and yet without such conditions his purpose could not be accomplished. To take a specific instance, God can hardly be thought of as eliminating by miracle whatever germ life becomes parasitic to the human body and causes disease, just as fast as that may occur. That is not conceivable if his purpose is one that needs to be accomplished through evolution and through moral development. Such an elimination he is indeed seeking to make. Diseases are not to be accepted passively as visitations of providence or as mysterious disciplines. But the elimination must

evidently come through increase of human intelligence and co-operation and mastery over environment. And yet, just as we believe that education for democracy is a workable ideal for the Chinese, so we may believe that cosmic evolution can be brought forward to the realization of democratic ethics in all human relations, to a federal world republic in which human brotherhood is the controlling ideal, to an establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

It must be made plain, however, that faith is indispensable for this interpretation, just as it is for religious experience in its more specific sense—not a faith that flies in the face of the facts, nor that arbitrarily cuts loose from the facts, but a faith that, candidly reviewing the facts, clings to the principle that the facts can be combined with the great values—either by constructive thinking or constructive moral living. Our interpretation of cosmic evolution, then, is not an underpinning for faith, such as natural theology claimed to furnish, without which the whole structure of the religious life would fall to pieces. Nor is it a palace of philosophic truth such as Hegel sought to erect, to replace the provisional

shelters that faith had provided. It is rather like the clothes that a working human being needs to wear in a rugged world. If the world of our experience were all a tropical zone, where ideals could live without effort, faith might not need to provide itself with a protective clothing of theory. But since the world of our experience is more like the northerly climate, where ideals must live by toil, where seasons change and tempests come, the protective clothing of a working theory of the universe must be formed by faith for the sake of its own health and efficiency.

II

H. G. Wells, however, in his recent writings has vigorously challenged the view which we have been developing, and, since his thinking in many respects reflects the modern situation, we need to measure our argument by his challenge. Moreover, he approaches the subject from the side of social and spiritual values instead of through an analysis and interpretation of an evolutionary process, such as Hobhouse and Bergson give, and so his position will give

us an opportunity for testing our argument in the realm of values—which for religious experience must always be the highest court of appeal. At the beginning of this lecture we formulated, on the basis of Mr. Wells's position, the question, Does the idea of God as the immanent controlling force in cosmic evolution enhance or impair the vital value of the experience of God for modern life? and to that question we now directly turn.

It is, indeed, legitimate, with reference to the argument that we have been making, to raise the question whether any theory of cosmic evolution is not bound to be too heavily weighted by the facts of evil to be able to give support to the experience of God. And if such a theory in the last analysis is a matter of faith instead of demonstration, one may be disposed to ask: "Why not unload it altogether?" It is possible to increase one's protective clothing until it becomes more like a suit of antiquated armor than a means to the health and efficiency of ideals. To Mr. Wells this appears to be not only a possibility but a fatal necessity, whenever the experience of God seeks to take up any posi-

tive interpretation whatever of the cosmic process as a whole. Let us turn for a moment to his own statement of the matter.

The God we need, Mr. Wells affirms, is a finite God, definitely personal, whom we know as we know a friend. He had a beginning in time, but he is immortal. He is courage, he is youth, he is austere love. He hopes and attempts, and gains his ends, not by passive suffering and non-resistance, but by fighting. His supreme goal is the conquest of death—"first," says Mr. Wells, "the overcoming of death in the individual by the incorporation of the motives of his life in an undying purpose, and then the defeat of that death that seems to threaten our species upon a cooling planet beneath a cooling sun."[1]

Now of such a God Mr. Wells holds that we may have an actual experience, and all do have an experience of him who participate in genuinely modern religion. But this experience has nothing whatever to do with any theory of the universe and should be kept entirely distinct from all such theories. God, he says, is the God of the heart, not the God of the universe.

[1] *God the Invisible King*, p. 99.

He is not the ultimate ground of reality. "The ultimate of existence," declares Wells, "is a Veiled Being, which seems to know nothing of life or death or good or ill."[1] Nor is God "the Life Force," of which Wells speaks as a "second Being" and "the maker of our world." "This heat and haste and wrath of life," "this Demiurge," seems to be both good and evil. "If it gives all the pain and conflict of life, it gives also the joy of the sunshine, the delight and hope of youth, the pleasures." But in any case it is not God. So far is God from being identifiable with either the Veiled Being or the Life Force that he must be thought of as having originated with man. "Somewhere," says Mr. Wells, "in the dawning of mankind he had a beginning, an awakening, and . . . as mankind grows he grows." And again—"He is the undying human memory, the increasing human will."[2]

And yet Mr. Wells will not admit that his idea of God makes him only the collective mind and purpose of the race. He insists that God is more than the sum of the best in mankind, and is a real Being in

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 14. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

himself, just as a temple is more than a gathering of stones, or an organism more than an aggregate of cells. Hence his position is different from a mere devotion to ethical and social ideals to which Ethical Culture in the official sense of the term limits itself, in that he lays the utmost stress upon a clear experience of a personal God, however limited the application of that experience to the world of reality may be.

Now if this doctrine of Mr. Wells be the true interpretation of the experience of God in modern life, then we have been utterly astray in seeking to bring out a relation between that experience and the idea of cosmic evolution. The experience of God can only be compromised and perverted by establishing such a relation—as it has been in the past, according to this author, by the Christian doctrines of creation and providence and by the whole trend of Christian theology. But no such doctrine can be accepted solely because of the zeal and enthusiasm with which it is set forth, nor yet because it is developed in reaction against limitations in the Christian doctrines of the past, which must be admitted to be very real when judged from

the standpoint of modern needs. We are bound, therefore, to ask whether either the idea of an experience of God or the needs of modern life are rightly interpreted by the doctrine of a God so decidedly finite as Mr. Wells represents him to be.

There are two fundamental objections to Mr. Wells's doctrine; and the first is that the metaphysics of nature and the metaphysics of humanity cannot be sharply separated, as he assumes. He frequently writes, to be sure, as if his views involved no metaphysics whatever, but were the product of pure experience alone. "Modern religion," he says, "bases its knowledge of God and its account of God entirely upon experience. It has encountered God. It does not argue about God; it relates."[1] And we may freely grant that a genuine experience of God is at the heart of the position that he has developed. A single passage illustrating this should in justice be quoted: "Then suddenly, in a little while, in his own time, God comes. This cardinal experience is an undoubting, immediate sense of God. It is the attainment of an absolute certainty that one is not alone in

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

one's self. It is as if one were touched at every point by a being akin to one's self, sympathetic, beyond measure wiser, steadfast and pure in aim. It is completer and more intimate, but it is like standing side by side with and touching some one that we love very dearly and trust completely."[1]

But this immediate experience receives a speculative interpretation at the hands of Mr. Wells as truly as the Christian experience has been given a speculative interpretation by theology. Only Mr. Wells would fain have simply a metaphysics of humanity. His God is the concrete organic unity of the best part of mankind, and he repudiates the idea of a God of the Universe. But the whole trend of modern scientific thinking leads us to recognize the unity between man and nature, so that apart from the metaphysics of nature there can be no metaphysics of humanity. And this fact Mr. Wells involuntarily bears witness to when he speaks of God as originating with mankind, claims immortality for him, and assigns him the task of conquering that great death of the race which is in store for it because it dwells "upon a cooling planet

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

beneath a cooling sun." Such ideas really require a positive and extensive connection between the conception of God and that of cosmic evolution—a requirement that cannot be evaded simply by ignoring the conception of evolution, as Mr. Wells so generally does. Indeed, by interpreting God only as the concrete unity of the best part of mankind his conception of God has become so finite that it is left without protection against two dangers—on the one hand the danger that it shall become absorbed into the type of religion which is only another name for ethics; and on the other the danger that to the average mind it shall come to stand only for a national or racial god—identified with a single national or racial culture.

But one to whom Mr. Wells's idea of a finite God seems emancipating may object that the God to whom the present discussion has pointed, even though immanent in cosmic evolution, is also finite. This we should have to grant if the term "infinite" were to be used in a merely abstract logical sense, meaning the absence of all limiting conditions of whatever nature. In such an Infinite, it is true, the experience of

God in modern life has no interest. But this experience is vitally interested that God should be infinite in the pragmatic sense of the term—that is, adequate for the practical solution of all our finite problems. Surely men who in this scientific age are consciously dealing with the universal laws of nature need a God who is infinite in the sense of being able to control those laws to moral ends. This need and the faith which satisfies it are admirably set forth in the following lines of Edwin Markham, who is no more bound by conventional religion than is Mr. Wells:

"Keep heart, O Comrade! God may be delayed
By evil, but he suffers no defeat;
Even as a chance rock in an upland brook
May change a river's course; and yet no rock,—
No, nor the baffling mountains of the world,—
Can hold it from its destiny, the sea.
God is not foiled; the drift of the world Will
Is stronger than all wrong. Earth and her years,
Down joy's bright way, or sorrow's longer road,
Are moving toward the purpose of the Skies."[1]

The second fundamental objection to this doctrine of a finite God is that it re-

[1] Published first in *Nautilus*.

sorts to metaphysical dualism for the explanation of evil. Mr. Wells is bent upon relieving God from all complicity with evil, especially with such colossal moral evils as this present war, and hence he declares that God is finite. But as a consequence he is led, as we have seen, to define the ultimate reality as a Veiled Being apparently indifferent to good or evil, and to hypostatize the Life Force into a second being, aimlessly producing both good and evil. Thus the relieving of God from complicity with evil is secured through the assumption of cosmic forces quite other than God to which it ultimately can be ascribed.

Now with the motive for this phase of Mr. Wells's thought doubtless we all sympathize, especially so far as it springs from the problem of the war. I surmise it to have been the experience of many of us to feel, as the awful horror of the war grew upon us, that the responsibility for it must not be assigned to God. The idea that it was an inscrutable providence, or that it was a special divine judgment, would not suffice to make it believable that God could be its source. If God must be thought of as the cause of the war, we felt

that we could not believe in God. But as we have tried to think the problem of the war through, many of us have felt that it also must not be assigned to cosmic forces other than God, but that the full responsibility must be borne by man. It is in fact always dangerous to find the explanation of moral evil outside of man himself. For just so far as that is done the possibility of man's eliminating the evil and establishing the good is diminished. It is only too common for both the social philosopher and the man of the street to-day to affirm that wars will be inevitable for indefinite centuries to come, and to stigmatize the idea of a federal world republic as utterly utopian. And the danger of this form of unfaith is that it can make itself true, just as the opposite doctrines, if held as a positive faith, may make themselves true. If then the assigning of evils like the war to God is fatal to religion, the assigning of them in great part to cosmic forces outside of man may be fatal to ethics. The modern man has too recently freed himself from the idea of a kingdom of Satan over against the Kingdom of God to find in the doctrine of a finite God over against huge semi-evil

or aimless cosmic forces an adequate form of religious faith.

These fundamental objections to the doctrine of a finite non-cosmic God are in themselves enough to show the positive value for modern religious experience of that conception of God which presents him as the immanent controlling force in cosmic evolution. But at the same time the idea of divine immanence gets its significance, in turn, chiefly from the kind of God who is believed to be immanent. Our preceding discussions led us to the conception of God as essentially moral creativity, and hence it is the morally creative God whose significance is enhanced by being recognized as the immanent controlling force in cosmic evolution. When we are able to find moral creativity as the unifying principle throughout the whole process of cosmic evolution, then we have the final element in that experience of being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will which we have seen to be of powerful constructive value for modern life.

Thus the cosmic God to whom our argument leads up is not a God who did all his thinking at some remote point in the past

and who now, like the bureaucratic official, has only to put his past thoughts into execution; rather is he a God who like the prophetic genius of a new democracy, is creatively thinking now and whose supreme aim is to bring the sons of men to creative thinking, in harmony with himself and with each other. Nor, again, is the cosmic God of our conception a static, sphinx-like God whose eternity consists in comprehending past and present, good and evil, in one unchanging gaze; rather is he a God who is living and working in time and who is eternal by reason of the inexhaustibleness of his creative love. And once more, the cosmic God of our thought is not a great Umpire of the Universe, who has constructed the rules of the game of life according to his own sovereign will, and who now administers the rules and deals with all violations in the spirit of aloofness and strict neutrality; on the contrary, he is the great Teacher of the Universe, guiding the studies and experiments of the school of life according to the living needs of developing spirits, and dealing with all their aspirations, struggles, and adventurings out into the untried and unknown—and likewise with

all their blindness, waywardness, passions, and sins—with completely self-giving love and boundless faith.

Our whole interpretation of evolution, therefore, rests back upon a characteristic type of religious experience—the consciousness of being coworkers with a morally creative God. When faith in God's fatherhood and man's sonship, in Jesus as Seer and Saviour, in the moral authoritativeness of prophet, apostle, and saint, lifts us to a new level of insight and power, we rightly judge that here if anywhere we are experiencing the divine. When the brotherhood of man and the Kingdom of God on earth present themselves to us as the supremely challenging tasks and draw us into the great cooperative work for their realization, we are impelled to believe that the divine is expanding in new creative power. When the bitterness of class strife and the woe of a war-torn world lead us to a new self-dedication to social redemption, we instinctively feel that the divine reality in its intensest and most poignant meaning is drawing us into fuller relation to itself. When the present experience of eternal values gives new substance to the hope of personal and

social immortality, we gain a fresh sense of the depth and range of divinity in this universe. In all these experiences fact and value meet and blend both in human ways and in ways that reach far beyond the confines of humanity. Experiences like these, we irresistibly feel, are experiences of God. They reveal to us the very essence of creative power and they bring us into a veritable sharing in the creative process.

Now if we are able to extend the meaning of these experiences—speculatively, if you will—throughout the entire range of cosmic evolution, and find in them the immanent controlling force of the whole cosmic process, the experiences themselves gain most significantly in richness and power. They transcend the realm of merely human aspiration and effort as the tragic but triumphant harmonies of the orchestral symphony transcend the plaintive melody of the folk-song from which their theme is taken. And in this very fact, as well as in the scientific continuities that we have sought to trace, the cosmic interpretation of these experiences gains a real verification.

Pre-eminently now, in the midst of our

present world tragedy, must the value of a cosmic interpretation of our supreme religious experiences be evident. Mr. Wells says: "God comes to us neither out of the stars nor out of the pride of life, but as a still small voice within."[1] But Kant points us to a more adequate working philosophy when he testifies: "Two things fill my soul with awe: the starry firmament above me and the moral law within me." And Paul, notwithstanding the limitations of the antique thought world, attains a yet higher spiritual synthesis when he finds God, the source of all things, perfectly revealed in Jesus Christ and through the triumph of Christ's redemptive work becoming literally all in all. But Jesus himself expresses the same synthesis with unrivalled simplicity and completeness when he teaches that the Power revealed to us in the sunshine and the rain is a Heavenly Father who is calling all men into sonship and who is seeking through forgiving love to lead them all forward together toward the perfect life.

And can we doubt that, for the men in the endless zigzag lines of trenches in

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

Europe, and for all who are praying and working for a better and more democratic world, the revelation of the stars can reinforce the revelation of the heart? Here a social order all unfinished and in vital danger, but there a cosmic order unshakeably established. Here the purposes of wisdom and love foiled and thrown backward by the unexampled outbreak of hatred, cruelty, waste, and vice; there unfailing resources for curative and redemptive work. Here exhaustion, pain, and wavering faith; there infinite energies for new idealism and for endless progress. It is true that when men looked to external nature for the main evidence for faith in God they were often led into the moral indifferentism of the maxim, "It will all be the same in a hundred years," and such indifferentism in a crisis like this is equivalent to moral surrender. But when men proceed from the God known in the heart and in the moral struggles and triumphs of history out to the cosmic interpretation of God they gain perspective for a more comprehensive social strategy and courage for a longer moral campaign. Then they are brought into the full meaning and power of that religious experience

which—whether summoning them to saviorhood in times of social catastrophe or to constructive endeavor in times of tranquillity—lifts them into the consciousness of being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will.

It has been our aim in these discussions to recognize the momentousness and the hopefulness of the present outreach—blindly groping or consciously purposeful—after a new religion; and the principle for the right appreciation of this outreach we have found in the fact that it seems to be the product of two convergent tendencies. On the one hand there is the demand that any experience of God to which men are summoned shall be one that is possessed and expressed unreservedly in the terms of modern life. On the other hand there is the recognition that modern life is far from being self-sufficient without religion, that it needs religion—and more specifically a living experience of God—provided these are of such a character as to contribute directly toward the solution of its central problems. The convergence of these two tendencies, we have felt, constitutes a direct challenge to

our thinking to do what it can toward giving this outreach for a new religion some genuine satisfaction.

From this point of view we have been discussing three central modern problems: the development of personality, the promotion of social progress, and the interpretation of cosmic evolution. And the result of our discussion has been that we have found the new religion which could make the largest contribution toward the solution of these problems to be—not that which centres in a non-purposive Creative Force, nor that which is comprised in Ethical Culture alone, nor that which offers a Finite God beginning to be with mankind—but that which appears in the self-renewing power of the Christian religion at its best. We have traced this self-renewal of Christianity through some of its significant stages and have seen it manifesting itself again in our own time wherever men are meeting life in the consciousness of being coworkers with an Eternal Creative Good Will. If the salt does not lose its savor—that is, if Christianity does not fail to apply to itself that creative moral intelligence demanded everywhere else in the

social order—the modern world will not fail to find the new religion that it needs and will be able to have as the unifying principle of its reorganized life a vital experience of God.

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